THE PANTHEON
OF PALMYRA

ÉTUDES PRÉLIMINAIRES AUX RELIGIONS ORIENTALES DANS L'EMPIRE ROMAIN

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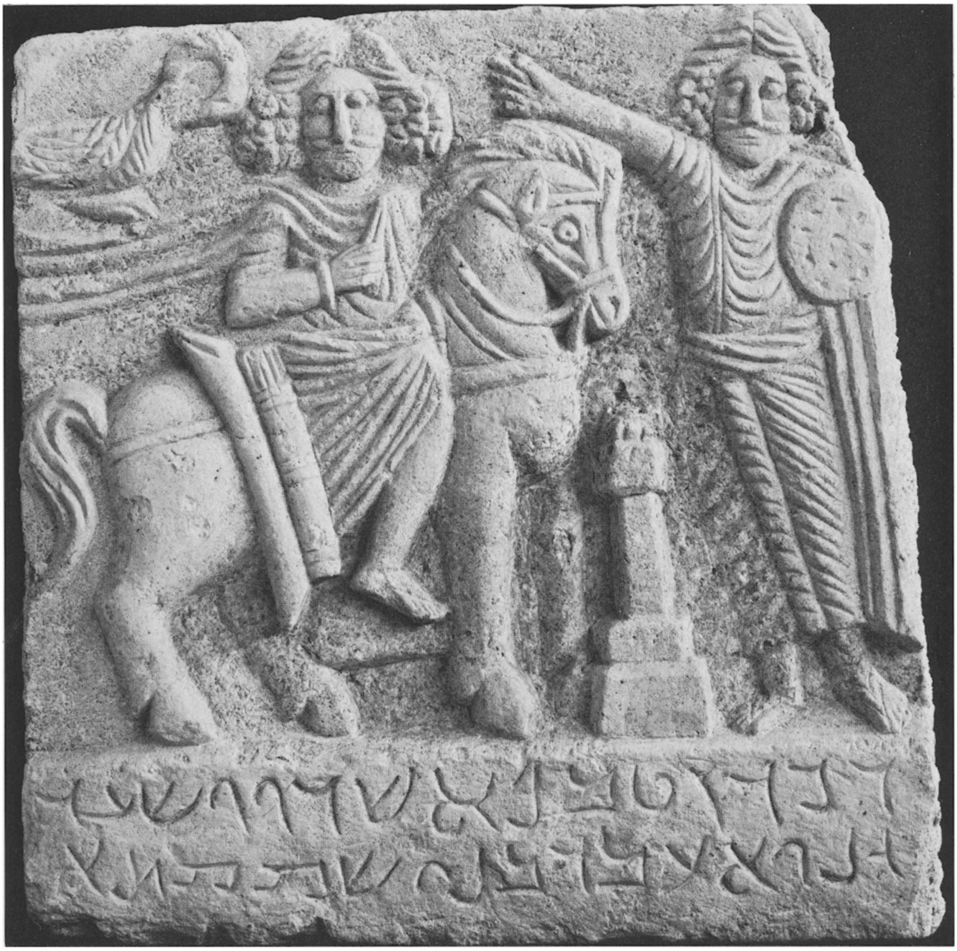

JAVIER TEIXIDOR

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WITH A FRONTISPIECE, A MAP AND 35 PLATES

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PREFACE

In *De natura deorum* Cicero describes an imaginary dialogue between four friends interested in discussing the nature of the gods and their divine actions. The subject is a challenging one, but it has aroused no interest among students of the Semitic pantheons. The philosophical questions expounded by Cicero in his book seemingly do not suit a type of research which is based perforce on archaeological and epigraphical facts. Yet one of the issues dealt with by Cicero bears on the divine names, their origin, and their significance. This was a frequent concern of the Classical philosophers. Sometime during their poignant discussion Cicero makes Cotta confront his colleague Velleius in the following terms: "You, Velleius, have the same name wherever you go: but Vulcan has different names in Italy, in Africa and in Spain. The number of different names is limited, even in our religious books: but the number of gods in your view is infinite. Or do some of them have no names? This in fact is what you ought to maintain: for if they all look the same why should they have different names? How much better it would be, Velleius, to confess your ignorance of things you do not know rather than to sicken us by spouting all this rubbish, which cannot be pleasant even to yourself. Do you really think that a god looks like me or like you? The fact is, you have no idea." [1]

The question raised by Cotta is valid: the existence of so many divine names in the Semitic pantheons embarrasses the historian. The Palmyrene inscriptions, too, mention many divine names, but this can hardly mean that the deities were as numerous as the names were. In sharp contrast with Minutius Felix's statement that a Christian should not seek a name for God because the name is God,[2] the pantheon of Palmyra stands as a conglomerate of names and epithets. This phenomenon, which is not unusual in the pantheons of the ancient Near East, shows that the rapport of the name or the epithet with the deity was often not clearly explained by the Palmyrene texts. A theological conception similar to the one presented by the pantheon of Palmyra survives in a dedicatory inscription written in Latin at the end of the sixteenth century on the façade of the Carthusian monastery of Pavia. According to this text the temple was dedicated to Mary "Virgini Matri Filie Sponse Dei." The plurality of epithets under which Mary is worshiped here does not invalidate the importance of any single aspect of her personality. The addition of four contradictory concepts, however, disturbs the reader, who can surmount the obstacle only by performing an act of faith.

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[1] Cicero *The Nature of the Gods* 1.83; trans. Horace C. P. McGregor, Penguin Books (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. 103.

[2] "Nec Deo nomen quaeras. Deus nomen est," par. 18.

Divine names and epithets describe concrete situations in which the believer understood his relation to the deities as personal and unique. Initially, names and epithets must have been given to the gods once their epiphanies had taken place; consequently equations of divine names are by necessity inaccurate because each deity had his personal way of making himself known to the faithful. The Athena of Palmyra cannot be the Semitic counterpart of the Greek goddess albeit she may enjoy some of the latter's external attributes. The Arab goddess Allat to whom the name Athena was given at Palmyra had in common with Athena of Athens little more than the warrior's shield.

The names and epithets of the gods should be understood in their cultural context as the genuine expression of a popular piety which has accepted the existence of a spiritual reality beyond the natural order of things. Names and epithets must have appealed to the imagination in a poetical manner. In his book *Genealogia deorum gentilium* Boccaccio, who wonders whether it is at all possible to penetrate the hearts of the Ancients, states that myths contain more than one meaning in order to stir the poetic imagination. This conviction, in Boccaccio's view, justifies the presence of an essay on poetry in a book that was intended to deal primarily with the genealogies of the gods. Even though the local myths of Palmyra are unknown, the student of its pantheon should not disregard Boccaccio's remarks, for the principle of his hermeneutics can be applied to the Palmyrene texts. Behind each divine name the historian must discover a multivalent reality. Names such as Baal Shamin, Yarhibol, Malakbel, Aglibol, Belti, "the Fortune of the tribe," "the Holy Brothers," etc., are utterances of the Palmyrene piety and not grammatical quizzes. The present book is meant to be a guide for the historian of the ancient religions and not an inventory of divine names for the use of Northwestern Semitic philologists. Therefore, learned conjectures lacking epigraphical support have been set aside and iconography has been used to buttress information furnished by the texts.

Palmyra was a crossroad of peoples and cultures. Amorites, Aramaeans, and Arabs, in this order, settled there, and their traditions merged to form the cultural backbone of the oasis. After the Amorites and the Aramaeans the arrival of the Arabs in the area made Palmyra the center of major Semitic groups to whom Aramaic served as a common link. The inscriptions reflect the influence of the Syro-Palestinian traditions. The pervasiveness of the Phoenician influence is a less-known phenomenon but, nonetheless, as real as the Phoenician presence in the Mediterranean. The Babylonian influence over Palmyra in liturgy and theology cannot be depreciated either. This exuberant assemblage of traditions should not discourage the study of the Palmyrene pantheon, but it should warn the scholar against facile simplifications.

Lack of a Palmyrene literature prevents the historian from knowing whether the city had discordant voices raised against its religious traditions. They certainly existed in the Greco-Roman tradition. Impiety, after all, is one of man's rights. Greco-Roman myths allow for thinking of the gods as man's peers, living in an Olympian abode where gossip, innuendos, and deceit become the recurrent events of their eternal well-being. The sarcasm of Lucian in *Icaromenippus* still lingers in the first pages of John Updike's *The Centaur* (1963). But if sarcasm derives from Socratic irony, so does Western piety with its rational vision of the world. Palmyrene religion was distant from this mainstream of thought. The inscriptions portray a pious community to which mystery had become, and rightly so, an element of its daily life. This element ought to be respected by modern historians. Hundreds of inscriptions, in Palmyrene or Greek, and several important religious buildings excavated in recent years have not yet unveiled all the secrets of the city. Rituals, prayers, honorific and religious inscriptions, funerary texts, names of dozens of influential families, have not yet produced a coherent picture of ancient Palmyra. Aware of these limitations, the present writer has treated the subject of the pantheon with some restraint. The gods demand composure. And it is Cicero's opinion that "to argue against the gods is a sinister and impious habit, whether it springs from conviction or from mere pretence." [3]

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The plan of Palmyra is reproduced, by permission of the Princeton University Press, from Javier Teixidor, *The Pagan God* (Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. ix, 102-103.

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[3] 2.168; p. 190.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE CULT OF THE SUPREME GOD

Bel

The god Bol of pre-Hellenistic Palmyra had his name changed to Bel under the influence of the Mesopotamian cult of Bel Marduk. The change must have taken place at a late date, for the element *bol* appears often in personal names: Zabdibol, Borrefa, Gaddibol, etc. By 217 B.C., at the battle of Raphia, the shift had already occurred: among the troops of Antiochus III in that engagement there was a chieftain called Zabdibel, whose land of origin must have been Palmyra (*Pagan God,* p. 113); the name is unknown outside the Syrian oasis.

Information regarding the cult of Bel at Palmyra is very scanty; the historian is therefore forced to put together archaeological elements of disparate origin. The inscriptions, however, furnish scholars with the theological notion of a divine triad comprising Bel, Yarhibol, and Aglibol whose cult was established in the city at least since A.D. 32. The pedestal of a statue found in the temple of Bel in 1932 bears an inscription which provides the following important statement:

1. byrḥ tšry šnt 357
2. ṣlm’ dnh dy lšmš br tybwl
3. br škybl dy mn bny kmr’ dy
4. ḥnk hykl’ dy bl wyrḥbwl
5. w‘glbwl ’lhy’ bqdšwhy
6. ywm štt’ bnysn šnt 343
7. dy ’qymw lh bnwhy lyqrh

(*Inv.* IX, 1.)

In the month Tishri, the year 357 (October, A.D. 45). This is the statue of Lishamsh son of Taibbol son of Shokaibel, of the Bene Komare, who dedicated the temple of Bel, Yarhibol, and Aglibol, the gods, on the day of their feast, the sixth day of Nisan, in the year 343 (April 6, A.D. 32). His children erected the statue in his honor.

The cult of the triad Bel, Yarhibol, and Aglibol seems to have been the result of theological speculation to which, presumably, political groups added their influential pressure (Pl. I). Bel was given a cosmic role in the pantheon of the city, while Yarhibol and Aglibol, two ancestral deities of the oasis, became his acolytes, representing the Sun god and the Moon god, respectively. In the first century B.C. the association of the three gods had not yet been planned, for an inscription written on a block belonging to the ancient wall T of the temple courtyard (see *Inv.* XI, p. 54) mentions Bel alone. The inscription reads:

1. byrḥ tšry šnt 2
2. 69 ʾqymw kmryʾ
3. dy bl ṣlmʾ dnh lgrymy
4. br nbwzbd dy mn pḥd
5. bny khnbw

(*Inv.* XI, 100.)

In the month Tishri, the year 269 (October, 44 B.C.), the priests of Bel erected this statue to Goraimai son of Nebuzabad, of the tribe of the Bene Kohenbo[l].

For the interpretation of the name of the tribe, see Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 31.

Between 44 B.C., when Bel alone was worshiped in the temple, and the year A.D. 32, when the sanctuary was dedicated to Bel, Yarhibol, and Aglibol, an inscription from Dura-Europos, dated in 33 B.C., makes a clear reference to the cult of Bel and Yarhibol in a temple of that military town of the Middle Euphrates:

1. byrḥ sywn šnt 2
2. 79 hw zbdbwl
3. br bʿyḥw dy mn bny
4. gdybwl wmlkw br
5. rmw dy mn bny kmrʾ
6. ʿbdw hyklʾ lbl
7. wyrḥbwl

(*Inv. D-E* 1.)

In the month Siwan, the year 279 (June, 33 B.C.), Zabdibol son of *bʿyḥw*, of the [tribe of the] Bene Gaddibol, and Maliku son of Ramu, of the [tribe of the] Bene Komare, erected the shrine for Bel and Yarhibol.

The texts of the years 44 and 33 B.C. and A.D. 32 show that theological speculations regarding the main cult of the city fluctuated during the second part of the first century B.C. The Palmyrene triad was the result of that slow process of assimilation involving the divine patrons of specific groups. Before A.D. 32 the inscriptions indicate that the temple of Bel housed the gods of several tribes. Brief texts written on stone blocks found in the area of the first temple of Bel mention the names of Manawat, an Arabian goddess; Aglibol and the Gad of Palmyra; the Babylonian goddesses Herta and Nanai; Reshef, a Canaanite deity; Baaltak, who was associated with Bel as his Lady. This variety of cults, seemingly the remnant of the assemblies or communities of gods mentioned in Phoenician inscriptions (*Pagan God,* p. 14), rightly explains why the temple of Bel was called "the house of the gods" (*Inv.* IX, 12; Gawlikowski, *Le temple,* pp. 56-61). In Mesopotamia, too, the shrines of the gods were erected in the precinct of Bel Marduk's temple. In the hymn to Marduk the poet says:

> No one among the gods shall transgress thy bounds!—Adornment being wanted for the seats of the gods,—Let the place of their shrines ever be in thy place. (*ANET*, 1955, p. 66).

The notion of a supreme god surrounded by his divine agents and "the whole family of the children of the gods" is by no means strange to the Near Eastern pantheons.

The archaeological excavations carried out in the temple area have not uncovered the structures of the first temple (Pl. II). Even future research may not accomplish it because the ancient architects leveled the area when the second temple was built. The temple court around a cella which is still standing today was decorated in Roman times with the statues of prominent citizens. The inscriptions on the consoles constitute the surviving source of information concerning the building activity in the temple.[1] In the eastern portico, for instance, an inscription states that in A.D. 17 the merchants of Seleucia-in-Babylon and those of Palmyra erected a statue to Yediʿebel son of Azizo to thank him for his continuous help in the construction of the temple (*Inv.* IX, 6a). Another inscription notes that in A.D. 24 the temple was under construction (*Inv.* IX, 11; Gawlikowski, *Le temple,* p. 68). In the years A.D. 52, 56, 60, and 74, the temple was decorated at the expense of Hairan son of Bonne (information provided by various inscriptions). In *Inventaire des inscriptions de Palmyre* IX, 20, the Greek text says that the priests of Bel offered a statue to Hairan in April, 56; in 60, when the Palmyrene version of the text was written, the construction of the temple was still going on. In 74, the Senate and the Assembly of Palmyra honored Hairan with a column on which an inscription written in Latin, Greek, and Palmyrene commemorates his financial assistance in decorating the various constructions of the temple of Bel (*Tadmorea* 2B; *Syria* 14 [1933] 174-176). In this badly preserved inscription, Gawlikowski (*Le temple,* p. 71) and Colledge (*Art of Palmyra,* p. 237) accept Cantineau's rendering of *mṣbth* as "decorator," but Milik's interpretation of the term as meaning "decorations" (*Dédicaces,* p. 226) seems more compatible with the fact that Hairan is nowhere else described as a decorator.

The inscriptions provide very succinct information about the cultic ceremonies that took place in the temple. A bilingual inscription of A.D. 51 specifies the gifts offered by a distinguished Palmyrene to the temple:

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[1] Remains of the structures of the first temple were found in the wall T, which lay buried in the vast temenos built under the Flavian emperors. These remains clearly indicate that the temple of Hellenistic times had been oriental in conception and decor (Seyrig, *Syria* 21 [1940] 277-281). Wall T formed part of the small temenos of the sanctuary inaugurated in A.D. 32. Later on, the Palmyrene architects enlarged the court around the cella to create a vast temenos (205 by 210 m) adorned with double porticoes and propylaea. Some of the honorific inscriptions of the first temenos were copied on the new consoles of the porticoes. A full report on the excavations undertaken by the French archaeologists in the 1930s can be found in Seyrig, Amy, and Will, *Le temple de Bel à Palmyre,* pp. 7-40.

1. [Παλμυρη]νῶν ἡ πό[λις Μοκειμον ʼΟγειλου τοῦ]
2. [κα]ὶ ʽΟχχαισου ἀρέσ[αντ]α αὐ(τ)ῇ τε καὶ τοῖς θεο[ῖς]
3. διδόντα ἐξ ἰδίων εἴς τ[ὸ ἱε]ρὸν σπονδοφό[ρον]
4. καὶ θυμιατῆριν χρυσᾶ ἐγ δηναρίων ρν′ καὶ τ[ ]
5. [φι]άλια τέσσαρα χρυσᾶ ἐγ δη. ρκ′ καὶ τ[ ]
6. [κ]αὶ πρ[οσ]κε(φ)αλάδιον εἴς τὴν τῆς ἀ[δύτου]
7. [κ]λείνην ἠγορασμ(έ)να ἀργυρίου δηναρ[ίων]
8. [τε]ιμῆς καὶ εὐνοίας ἕνεκεν ἔτους βξτ′ μηνὸς [Δύστρου]
9. ṣlm’ dnh dy mqymw br ‘gylw br pṣy’[l]
10. br tymy dy mtqrh ḥkyšw dy mn bny zb(dbwl)
11. [dy ’]qymw lh gbl tdmry’ klhn mn dy špr [lhn]
12. [wq]rb lbt ’lhyhn mn[. . .]w[. . .]qr[. . .]
13. [byrḥ ’]dr [šnt] 3[6]2

(*Inv.* IX, 8.)

(*Greek.*) [The city of the Palmyre]nes (has erected this statue) [to Moqimu son of ‘Ogeilu, nicknamed] Hokkaishu, because he was pleasing to it and to the gods and, at his own expense, gave to [the temp]le the vase for libations and a golden censer worth 150 denarii, and [. . .] four golden libation bowls worth 120 denarii, and [. . .], and a pillow for the couch of the [adyton ?] bought at the price of [. . .] denarii. To his honor and as a token of good will. The year 362, the month Dystros (March, A.D. 51).

(*Palmyrene.*) This statue is of Moqimu son of ‘Ogeilu son of Phaṣaiel son of Taimai, nicknamed Hokkaishu, of the Bene Zabdibol, which the Assembly of all the Palmyrenes erected to him because he was thoughtful of them, and offered to the temple of the gods [. . .]. [In the month A]dar, [the year] 3[6]2 (March, A.D. 51).

This text is unfortunately damaged, and the restitutions proposed by scholars are conjectural (Milik, *Dédicaces*, pp. 154-155; Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, pp. 69-70). The gifts paid for by Moqimu, however, reveal that the intention of the donor was to offer objects that could be used in the ceremonies performed at the temple.

The cella of the temple is a rectangular building standing on a podium raised in the center of the temenos (Pl. III: 1). Inside the cella, which the visitor enters through the western side, there are two niches or thalami, one at each short end of the room. In the northern niche (Pl. IV: 1), the lintel is decorated with a carving of an eagle spreading its wings over a sky of stars. A serpent swaying between the stars represents the sun in its daily course. The eagle, which here stands for Bel, is accompanied on either side by a figure. That on the right, today the sole companion image visible, personifies Yarhibol (Seyrig, *Syria* 14 [1933] 255; Colledge, p. 38, fig. 17). In the domed ceiling of the niche the artist has indicated the zodiac (*Syria* 14 [1933] 258-259) around seven hexagonal medallions, each portraying an astral deity: Jupiter (Bel) in the center, the sun, Mars, the moon (Selene), Venus (veiled), Saturn, and Mercury (Colledge, p. 38). The artist obviously followed a Greek model, omitting, however, the astrological conceptions that prevailed when the model was made and that would have given the sun a preeminent position in the sky.

On the facade of the southern niche (Pl. IV: 2) the artist has carved a prostyle building in two dimensions and has decorated the ceiling with geometrical and floral motifs.

Nothing is known about the furniture, statues, or cultic objects that decorated these niches. But the inscription recording Moqimu's benefactions casts some light on the matter. The existence of a couch in one of the thalami of the cella, as described in the bilingual inscription, is confirmed by a tessera that depicts a bedstead and its mattress; under the bed, the name *bl*, "Bel," is visible (*RTP* 60). The tessera must have reproduced the furniture that existed in one of the niches of the cella. Another tessera with a similar drawing shows a couch flanked by two birds and bears the name *ʿštrt*, "Astarte." The other side bears the following inscription: *ʾgn bl bny ydyʿbl*, "Banquet of Bel. The Bene Yediʿebel" (*RTP* 124). The bed or couch seems to be a *pulvinar*, i.e. the couch used by the gods in their celebrations. The two tesserae clearly indicate that the practice of the *lectisternium* was known in ancient Palmyra (Seyrig, *Syria* 14 [1933] 260-263). At least some of the objects presented by Moqimu would have been used for this purpose. Of course, the ritual must have been complex, and the description of it left by Herodotus (1.181) helps reconstruct the Palmyrene ceremonies which Moqimu so well enhanced with his generosity.

A block of stone uncovered in 1935 in the ancient rampart of Palmyra bears a Greek inscription which consists of an honorific decree thanking a donor for his various gifts to the temples of the city. Only the first lines are missing. Among the presents mentioned by the text is the litter (*phoreion*) of the "divine Bôrroaônos." The inscription permits the reader to imagine the litter as a columned aedicule (*apopseis*). The anonymous donor had the whole structure made in silver plate. The litter was intended fully to expose the statue of the god to the view of the faithful when carried in processions. Only on these rare occasions were worshipers given the opportunity of looking at the god, whose statue remained hidden in a thalamus of the cella for most of the year (Seyrig, *Syria* 18 [1937] 373-376). Even though archaeological evidence for the ceremonial processions at Palmyra is lacking, coins of several ancient Near Eastern cities confirm the use of litters in religious processions (Seyrig, ibid., p. 377, fig. 1).

The name Bôrroaônos has been a puzzle to epigraphists. It can be conjectured that the term may refer to the sacred aedicule as well as to the statue of the god which was moved along the streets of Palmyra. In the processions of Holy Week in southern Spain the floats and the biblical statues borne on them (i.e. the famous *pasos*) have always had religious names by which they are identified by the faithful. The names are recognized by the bylaws of the brotherhoods. Among the familiar names of the floats and their statues are: *paso* of Jesus the Prisoner, *paso* of Jesus bound to the column for flagellation, *paso* of the Virgin of Solitude, etc. (Caro Baroja, *Estudios sobre la vida tradicional española*, pp. 55-82). In the same way the statue of *Bôrroaônos* (*Bôl-roaônos*) in the aedicule could have represented a particular aspect of the cult of Bel, and this tradition could have started at the time when Bel was still invoked as Bol. In the Greek text the name Bôrroaônos is followed by *theos*, which clearly emphasizes both the sacred character of the term and its reference to Bol/Bel. In Bôrroaônos the second element seems to render the form *ruʿon*, from a pattern *qutlan/qutlon* and to derive from Aramaic *rʿʾ*, "to be pleased" (Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 48). But this etymological explanation says nothing about the way Bel was depicted on the litter.

Notwithstanding his association with Yarhibol and Aglibol Bel received occasional acts of cult addressed to him alone. A Greek inscription on an altar found in the court of the temple seems to proclaim him "the one, sole, and merciful" god. The author of this particular confession of faith was Malkos son of Barea son of Malikos, the president of the Senate about 200 (*Inv.* X, 55; *Pagan God*, p. 123).

Bel is of course associated with other gods than Yarhibol and Aglibol; for instance, he is mentioned on the tesserae together with Shamash (*RTP* 138, 142) or with Nebo (*RTP* 119, 136, 137). A tessera mentions Bel and Nergal, the name of the latter coming on the reverse after *bl'str* (*RTP* 127). But it is his association with Astarte/Allat on the tesserae that prevails. This female companion is sometimes called *blty*, "my Lady." In these cases the supreme god of the pantheon seems to be associated with a goddess who assumes the true role of a female partner. Hadad and Atargatis among the Aramaeans (see pp. 73-74), Baal Shamin and Astarte among the Phoenicians (*Pagan God*, pp. 34-38), Orotal (Ruḍa or Ruldaiu) and Allat among the Arabs (see pp. 56-57), Baal Ḥamon and Tanit among the peoples of North Africa, all these divine pairs offer elements of comparison with Bel and Allat/Astarte, Bel and *blty*, or Bel and Herta (see p. 111) at Palmyra. Herta's name reveals her as the true spouse of Bel. The cultic formula *bl'str*, or *bwl'str*, attested at Palmyra in inscriptions and on tesserae, singles out the union which the faithful believed to be characteristic of the two deities. To the eyes of the Palmyrenes the union of Bel and his companion became an object of cult, as is manifested in an altar inscription found in the temple of Bel:

1. [']lt' dh dy 'b[d] mlkw br ḥyrn
2. [br ']gyl[w] lbwl'str 'lh'
3. ['l ḥywhy] wḥyy bnwhy w'ḥ[w]hy
(*Tadmorea* 32; *Syria* 19 [1938] 79-80.)

This is the altar which Malku son of Hairan son of 'Ogeilu erected to Bolastar, the god, for his life and the lives of his children and brothers.

The spelling *bwl* instead of *bl* indicates that the association of Bel and Ishtar/Astarte had become a cultic formula at an early date. In the inscription, *ʾlhʾ* must stand for "divine" (*ʾlhyʾ*) rather than for "the god." In the cultic or liturgical name *Bolastar* the "epiclesis" of Bel with his consort is celebrated as particular mysteries or theological concepts are worshiped by the Catholic Church, for instance, the mystery of the *Trinity* in God (in some countries *Trinity* became a personal name for both men and women). Other theological notions are the Holy Family, the Assumption of the Virgin Mary (and *Assumption* is a female given name in Spanish-speaking countries), the Immaculate Conception, etc. At Palmyra, the mystery of Bel's union with the goddess is often accompanied by the mention of Nergal, the god of the netherworld; see page 113.

Bel's association with Yarhibol and Aglibol, however, became the most frequent grouping of deities in ancient Palmyra, as monuments and texts indicate (Pl. III: 2). The triad of Bel is often accompanied by other gods. In one case, on a relief (Pl. VII: 2) from the region of al-Maqateʿ, 14 km to the north of Palmyra, Bel and Baal Shamin appear together flanked by Yarhibol and Aglibol (*Inv.* XII, 54). This monument is of great interest, for Bel and Baal Shamin are systematically invoked in their inscriptions as Zeus, and Zeus could be but one. In this respect, the relief from al-Maqateʿ illustrates the views of ignorant villagers and not those of the Palmyrene theologians to whom the two names must have embodied, ethnically and culturally, two separate traditions bound to coalesce in the syncretistic milieu of the city.

Seyrig has listed in *Syria* 48 (1971) 90, note 1, the monuments in which the triad is mentioned. To them may be added the base of a relief, badly damaged, mentioning the three deities (*Inv.* XI, 74). Very likely this monument comes from the area of the temple of Bel at Palmyra (Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, p. 51). The tesserae are an important source of information regarding the triad. One of them (*RTP* 24) represents the bust of Bel equipped with a cuirass, wearing a polos and a diadem, and flanked by two stars. The legend reads: *kmry bl*, "The priests of Bel." Another tessera

(*RTP* 28) portrays Bel in the same manner, but two members of the triad have replaced the stars: Yarhibol appears cuirassed and radiate, and Aglibol, also cuirassed, bears a crescent on his shoulders. Here again the legend says: *kmry bl*, "The priests of Bel." Tesserae *RTP* 118, 119, 120, and 121 also depict the three gods, but 119 adds the images of a Nike and Apollo, to the latter of whom is given the name Nebo (*nbw*) in Palmyrene.

Outside Palmyra the triad of Bel was worshiped in the Palmyrene temple of Rome, relics of which were found as early as 1486 (Chabot, *CISem.* II, p. 13). An inscription in Greek and Palmyrene discovered in 1860 styles Bel, Yarhibol, Aglibol, and Astarte as ancestral gods (*theoi patrooi*; *CISem.* II, 3904). An altar found on the island of Cos bears a bilingual inscription recording the dedication of the monument to the gods of the triad in the following terms:

1. [r]b'l br ḥyrn
2. [b]ryk qdm bl
3. wyrḥbl w'glbwl
4. dy 'qym 'lt'
5. Ραββηλ Αἱρα-
6. νου θεῶι βή-
7. λω εὐχήν

(Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 43.)

(*Palmyrene.*) Rabbel son of Hairan. May he be blessed in front of Bel, Yarhibol, and Aglibol. (He is the one) who erected the altar.

(*Greek.*) Rabbel son of Hairan to Bel the god. A votive offering.

The Palmyrene sentence has an anacoluthon. Moreover, the name of Yarhibol is not spelled according to the orthography in use at Palmyra. The script itself presents some irregularities and, most probably, betrays archaic forms that would lead to a dating at the end of the first century B.C. or, better, by the middle of the first century A.D. The handwriting does not follow the contemporary fashions of writing practiced at Palmyra, which is by no means surprising far from the metropolis; see my remarks in *JAOS* 92 (1972) 529-530. The dedication of the altar can be compared to that of another bilingual inscription, in Greek and Nabataean, uncovered on the same island (Levi Della Vida, *Clara Rhodos* 9 [1938] 139-147).

Another monument dedicated to the triad is the relief found outside Palmyra at Homs. The possibility that the monument had been taken away from Palmyra cannot be excluded. Today it is housed in the Museum of Brussels. The monument is badly damaged and only three figures are left, two of them identified by their Greek names. To the left stands Aglibol. In the center there is a female figure above which the name *Athena* has been written.[2] On the right a god is shown standing, dressed in local garb. Above him is the name *Keraunios* (Chabot, *Choix*, pl. XIX; Seyrig, *Syria* 13 [1932] 51, 192, pl. XVIII, 4). This is a late monument, probably of the third century, and it is possible that the names of the gods were added later (Colledge, p. 47). The Greek inscription on the plinth reads as follows:

[. . . Bη]λῳ ʼΙαρεβωλῳ ʽΑγλιβωλῳ Καισελ[λιος. . .]
(Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 43.)

Even though information concerning the cult of the triad is scanty, Bel emerges as a supreme god and, consequently, is entitled to be worshiped as a Zeus. The priests of his temple materialized their faith in Bel's excellence by giving him the status of a cosmic god. They integrated into his cult those of Yarhibol, an ancestral deity of the oasis, and Aglibol, a Moon god who came to Palmyra from North Syria. Yarhibol and Aglibol not only personified the sun and the moon in the official ceremonies of the temple; they also brought their followers into that religious center of civic life which was the temple of Bel. The possibility cannot be excluded that the priests of Bel, behind their theological speculations, had manipulated the political forces of the city to strengthen the role of their temple over church and state.

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[2] The figure represented is certainly that of Nemesis. In this context the name *Athena* given to the goddess on the relief can only underline the striking dissociation existing at Palmyra between myths and religion. In general, Greek myths here lost their original value, to become mere objects of decor; see *Pagan God*, pp. 144-146.

Bel/Bel Ḥamon and Manawat

The cult of Bel expanded beyond the material limits of the main temple. In the first century of our era the supreme god of Palmyra became the deity of the high place on top of the Jebel Muntar, a crest that dominates the ancient city from the southwest. Here, Bel's name was Bel Ḥamon. Before the inscription that effectively acknowledges Bel Ḥamon as the god of the high place is quoted, mention should be made of the texts proving that Bel Ḥamon represented an aspect of Bel's personality.

An archaic inscription of the first century B.C. found in a wall ("T") of the first temenos of the temple of A.D. 32 recalls an offering made to Bel in the following terms:

1. qrb tbrʾ br zbdlh
2. wmqym br zbdbwl ʾšʿd
3. lbl blḥmn wmnwt

(*Inv.* XI, 99.)

Tabira son of Zabdilah and Moqim son of Zabdibol Ashaad offered (this) to Bel Bel Ḥamon and Manawat.

Bel Ḥamon is an epithet meaning "Lord of the Amanus," i.e. the Baal of Mt. Amanus, in whom the Canaanites saw a supreme god. El, the god of the Canaanite pantheon, was given the epithet *Baal Ḫamon*; later on, the epithet became a divine name, hence a divine being to be equated with Kronos or Saturnus. If the epithet *ʿOlam*, "the Ancient One," of Ugaritic and Phoenician texts is indeed an appellation of El, the Latin epithets *Gerontis* applied to Kronos or *Senex* or *Saeculo* (*Frugifero*) used of Saturn (Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, p. 25) represent the survival in the western Mediterranean of the early cultic formulae of the Canaanites. But it remains to be explained why Baal Ḥamon in North Africa inherited El's personality but not his titles, for the Punic inscriptions fail to style him "the Ancient One." No epithet characterizes the Palmyrene Bel Ḥamon either, which seems to corroborate the conviction that he was believed to be an avatar of Bel.

Another text that can be used to advocate that Bel Ḥamon equates Bel is the Latin inscription of Sarmizegetusa, in Dacia. The text reads as follows:

Diis patriis Malagbel et Bebellahamon et Benefal et Manavat P. Ael. Theimes II viral(is) col(oniae) templum fecit solo et inpendio suo pro se suisq(ue) omnibus ob pietate ipsorum circa se iussus ab ipsis fecit et culinam suniunxit (Starcky, *Studi* ... *Della Vida,* II, pp. 516-518; Milik, *Dédicaces,* p. 144.)

The Palmyrene temple was dedicated to Malakbel in the first place. This preeminence over Bel/Bel Ḥamon—a name that the scribe wrote incorrectly—poses some problems of exegesis. They can be best explained by arguing that Malakbel as the Sun god acquired the prerogatives of a supreme deity. By the middle of the third century he was given the epithet Sol Sanctissimus in an altar inscription preserved in the Capitoline Museum, thus monopolizing the devotion of the Palmyrenes living in Rome (*CISem.* II, 3903).

Bel (Baal) Ḥamon came to Palmyra from the Canaanite lands, and Arab tribes were responsible for the diffusion of his cult. The cult of Baal Shamin at Palmyra was also brought into the oasis by Arab tribes that came from the Anti-Lebanon or the Hauran (*Pagan God,* p. 131, n. 88). The Arab tribe of the Bene Agrud seems to have been particularly devoted to Bel Ḥamon. In A.D. 89 they built a sanctuary in his honor on top of the Jebel Muntar (Pl. V: 1, 2). This conferred on Bel Ḥamon the status of the god of the high place of Palmyra. The inscription commemorating the dedication of the sanctuary was written on the lintel of the main gate (Pl. V: 3). In 1965 the block of limestone, 2.09 m long and 35 cm high, bearing this text was found upside down in front of the cella, which had been used as a mosque around 1162 (du Mesnil du Buisson, *CRAI* 1966, pp. 170-176). The text consists of three lines, each 1.80 m long:

1. lbl ḥmwn ʿbdw mn kyshwn mqymw br mqymw br zbdbwl ʿrymʾ wyrḥbwlʾ br mlkw br lšmš br ḥnbl ʾʿby hyklʾ dnh wʾsṭwʾ
2. dy šyšʾ dy qdmwhy wʾsṭwʾ dy lʿl mnh wtṭlylʾ klh wtrʿwhy wšrgbʾ dy nḥšʾ wʾp qrbw hyklʾ dy mnwt wʾsṭwwhy wtṣbyth
3. klh ʿl ḥyyhwn wḥyy bnyhwn wʾḥyhw[n] lʿlmʾ byrḥ ʾyr šnt 400

(*Inv.* XII, 48.)

To Bel Ḥamon, Moqimu son of Moqimu son of Zabdibol ʿArima and Yarhibola son of Malku son of Lishamsh son of Hannibel ʾAʿabai, at their own expense, have erected this sanctuary, and the portico of alabaster which is in front of it, and the portico which is below, and all the ceiling, and its door, and the *śrgbʾ* in bronze. And they have also offered the sanctuary of Manawat and its portico, and all its decoration, for their lives, and the lives of their children and brothers for ever. In the month Iyyar, the year 400 (May, A.D. 89).

An abridged version of this inscription, written on a console, was found in the cella during the excavation of 1965. The architectural terms used in this text are identical to those of the first inscription except for *mlbnh,* "its gate," instead of *trʿwhy*. *mlbn* is an even vaguer term still used at Palmyra today to indicate the frame of a doorway.

The families of the donors of the temple are known. Moqimu son of Moqimu belonged to the tribe of the Bene Agrud. Some ten years earlier than the building of the mountain sanctuary Moqimu had erected statues in honor of his father and brothers. An inscription on a block of limestone 88 cm long and 39 cm high, to be dated around A.D. 79, commemorates a complex building, as the use of the term *bnʾ* indicates. The whole text reads as follows:

1. ṣlmyʾ ʾln wkpyhn wb/s[ ]
2. wbnʾ mqymw br mqym[w br zbdbwl ʿrymʾ]
3. lyqr mqymw ʾbwhy wʾ[ḥwhy?]
4. byrḥ ʾb šnt 39[?...ṣlm mqymw]
5. rbʾ br zbdbw(l) ʿrymʾ ṣlm z[bdbwl brh ṣlm]
6. mlkw brh ṣlm bwrpʾ brh[ ]

(*Inv.* XI, 81.)

These (are) the statues and their niches [which ...] and built [by] Moqimu son of Moqimu [son of Zabdibol ʿArima] in honor of Moqimu his father and [his brothers? ...], in the month Ab, the year 39[? ... Statue of Moqimu] the Elder son of Zabdibol ʿArima. Statue of Za[bdibol, his son. Statue of] Malku, his son. Statue of Borrefa, his son [...].

For the reconstruction of the missing sections, see Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 234, and Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, pp. 83-84.

An earlier inscription mentions a building erected by Moqimu the Elder. The text is fragmentary but clearly states that the family of Moqimu belonged to the Bene Agrud:

2. [ ] wʿzqb[ ]
3. bnhy mqymw br zbdb[wl]
4. br ʿrym[ʾ] dy mn pḥd bn[y]
5. ʿgrwd lh lbnwhy
6. wlʾḥwhy wʿl zbdbwl
7. ʾbwhy lyqrhn

(*Inv.* VIII, 71.)

[. . .] built [by] Moqimu son of Zabdibol son of ʿArima, who is from the tribe of the Bene Agrud. For him, and his sons, and for his brothers, and for Zabdibol, his father. In their honor.

In A.D. 81 the father of Yarhibola, the second donor to the sanctuary of Bel Ḥamon, had the dignity of a statue in the Agora of the city conferred upon him by the tribe of the Bene Agrud. The honorific text, in Greek and Palmyrene, makes the observation that the tribe offered him the statue "because he had been kind to them" (*bdyl dy špr lhwn*; *Inv.* X, 131). On the other hand, a son of Yarhibola became "chief of a thiasos," i.e. symposiarch, around 120 (Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 233). Two tesserae mention his full name: Shalman Yarhibola Malku ʾAʿabai *rb mrzḥʾ* (*RTP* 31, 34). It is possible that the title *rb mrzḥʾ* indicated the function of high priest in the sanctuary of Bel, but no decisive argument can be presented in favor of this thesis.

The families of the two donors were devotees of Bel, and their participation in the liturgy of the temple is attested by a tessera (*RTP* 99) that shows a rugged mountain on top of which is a crenellated tower; the reverse bears the inscription *ʾgn bl bny ʿgrwd*, "Symposium of Bel. The Bene Agrud." The sanctuary of Bel Ḥamon on the Jebel Muntar is also depicted on tesserae 214 and 224 (Seyrig, *RTP*, p. 31). It is, then, certain that the archaeological remains found by the mission of R. du Mesnil du Buisson in 1965 on the Jebel Muntar represent a complex of two buildings, one a tower, the other a lower construction attached to the tower. Only the tower, a small building, is crenellated. The long inscription

(Pl. V: 3) on the lintel of the main gate now seems to clarify the existence of two buildings (*Inv.* XII, 48). The wording of the inscription, moreover, points out that there must have been two sanctuaries on top of the jebel, both called *hyklʾ*.

The identification of Baal Ḥamon with Bel can be easily explained by the influence that Babylonia exerted on Palmyra once the Bene Agrud had settled in the city. The sanctuary of Bel Ḥamon stood as the dwelling place of Bel. In the ancient Near East mountains were considered sacred because they stood between heaven and earth, and this made them places worthy to be habitations for the gods. The Babylonian culture which was responsible to a great extent for developing the cult of Bel at Palmyra may also have prompted the devotion to Bel under the name of Baal Ḥamon, the Lord of Mt. Amanus, as the Lord of the high place on the crest of the Jebel Muntar. The cult patronized by the tribes that arrived from the west could be encouraged on the basis of a parallelism with that of the Mesopotamian god who had a temple on top of the ziggurat and another one at its base. Very likely Palmyrenes saw in Bel a god like the Mesopotamian Bel Marduk, and the transition from Baal Ḥamon to Bel Ḥamon must have taken place when the name Bol of the supreme god of the city had already changed to Bel. The name Bel Ḥamon is attested by an inscription, very incomplete, written on a fragment of gypsum (*Inv.* XII, 50). On paleographical grounds the inscription can be dated in the first century B.C.

Several inscriptions mention the cults of Bel Ḥamon and Manawat together. The association of these deities is therefore not surprising. The text over the main gate of the sanctuary on the Jebel Muntar, in addition, strengthens the view that the Bene Agrud were an ancient tribe, for Manawat, their goddess, became known in the pantheons of Arabia before Allat and al-Uzza attained preeminence in the Near East. Ibn-al-Kalbi in his *Book of Idols* considers Manawat "the most ancient of all idols" of the Arabs (his p. 12). He tends to present the cults of Manawat, Allat, and al-Uzza as one or another having ascendance over the others intermittently throughout generations. His is not an academic discourse. Yet historical information can be easily gleaned from his remarks.

It is ibn-al-Kalbi who mentions that the Arabs used to name their children ʿAbd-Manah and Zayd-Manah, but that later the Quraish as well as other Arab tribes, after having adopted Manawat as their goddess and worshiped her attentively, started to name their children after Allat, calling them Zayd-Allat and Taym-Allat. For a third time, the Arabs and of course the Quraish "were wont to name their children ʿAbd-al-Uzza," thus changing once more the pattern of their religious life (ibid., pp. 12-16). This most interesting superimposition of fashions in names easily explains the absence of the cult of al-Uzza at Palmyra. The Arab tribes that settled in the oasis parted from other Arab tribes before the cult of al-Uzza had been widely accepted in North Arabia.

Manawat was popular among the Nabataeans. The inscriptions presumably define her personality as that of a goddess who appropriates gifts to her worshipers and presides over chance and luck. She appears to have been a Nabataean Nemesis (Starcky, *Supp. DB*, VII, cols. 1000-1001). But this identification does not fit into the Palmyrene pantheon, for *nmsys* (Nemesis) is mentioned after Astarte in a list of eight deities represented in a relief from Wadi ʿArafa, some 50 km northwest of Palmyra (*Inv.* XII, 55).

Inscriptions and monuments indicate that, at Palmyra, Manawat's cult never merged into that of Allat, whose cultic center existed in the Arab quarter of the city. The two goddesses must have come to the oasis separately, each one as the Fortune of a different Arab group, thus indicating that their personalities may occasionally be concealed under the generic title of the *Gad* or Fortune. In the first century B.C. votive inscriptions were addressed to Manawat, as an altar inscription found in the temple of Bel proves (*Inv.* XI, 46). Later on, however, when the cult of the temple of Bel was organized in a more solemn, official manner, Manawat became the *Gad* of the Bene Agrud just as Allat concealed her name under the title the *Gad* of Yediʿebel. Two tesserae acknowledge the union of Bel Ḥamon and Manawat: *RTP* 213 bears the inscription *blḥmwn* on one side and on the other *gd ʿgrwd*; *RTP* 224 does not mention Bel Ḥamon, but the sanctuaries of Bel Ḥamon and Manawat on the crest of Muntar are represented on one side while the other side has the words *gd ʿgrwd.*

The association of Bel Ḥamon and Manawat constitutes one of the most consistent elements of the Palmyrene pantheon. Of course, this raises the question whether Manawat played the role of a female partner to Bel/Bel Ḥamon. In the devotion shown by the Bene Agrud to the divine pair another testimony can be seen in favor of Herodotus' statement (3.8) that the gods of the Arabs were basically two, a god and a goddess, which does not necessarily mean that they formed a married couple. In the association of Bel Ḥamon and Manawat the original personality of the supreme god of the tribe is hidden under the name of Bel Ḥamon, to whom the Bene Agrud at a certain moment in their wanderings in Syria must have equated their male god. It is worth noticing that the name *ʿrymʾ*, borne by the ancestor of the Bene Agrud, means "shrewd" and is of Aramaic extraction (Stark, *PNPI*, p. 107).

From their sanctuary on the Jebel Muntar Bel Ḥamon and Manawat paid their courtesy tributes to other gods, as the inscriptions often note. According to an altar inscription of 128, Bel Ḥamon and Manawat offered an altar to the god "whose name is blessed for ever" (most probably Yarhibol) near the sanctuary of the spring of Efca. A certain Atteʿaqab son of Hairan represented the gods and paid the full price of the gift (*Inv.* XII, 43). Thus, the two gods were not only associated as recipients of the popular prayers but also as active members of the pantheon of the city.

Baal Shamin-Duraḥlun

Baal Shamin is the ancient god of the Canaanite and Phoenician coast with its fertile soils and clear skies (Pl. VI). The title Lord of Heaven means that this deity is the god to whom the heavens belong (*Pagan God*, pp. 26-29). His cult spread toward the arable lands of Syria, and his preeminence as a supreme weather god was acknowledged in the Hauran and in the Anti-Lebanon by Arab tribes (ibid., pp. 59, 81-82, 131n). It is from these buffer zones between the coast and the Syrian Desert that the cult of Baal Shamin reached Palmyra.

So far, the earliest inscription from the temple of Baal Shamin at Palmyra, found in the northern court, is of November, A.D. 23. The text runs as follows:

1. byrḥ knwn šnt 335
2. qrbw ʿty wšbḥy bnt šḥrʾ
3. wʿtʾ brt prdš ʿmwdyʾ ʾln
4. tryhwn lbʿlšmn ʾlhʾ ṭbʾ
5. ʿl ḥyyhn wḥyy bnyhn wʾḥyhn

(*BS* 10.)

In the month Kanun, the year 335, Attai and Shabhai daughters of Shahra, and Atta daughter of Firdush, have offered these two columns to Baal Shamin, the good god, for their lives and the lives of their children and brothers.

In January, A.D. 52, another woman made a similar offering to the god:

1. byrḥ ṭbt šnt 363
2. ʿmwdʾ dnh qrbt ʾmtlt b[r]t
3. brʿʾ br ʿtntn dy mn bnt mytʾ
4. ʾtt tymʾ br blḥzy br zbdbl dy
5. mn pḥd bny mʿzyn lbʿlšmn ʾlhʾ
6. ṭbʾ wškrʾ ʿl ḥyyh wḥyy bnyh
7. wʾḥyh

(*BS* 11.)

In the month Tebet, the year 363, Amtallat daughter of Baraa son of ʿAttenatan, from the tribe of the Bene Mitha, wife of Taima son of Belḥazai son of Zabdibel, from the tribe of the Bene Maazin, dedicated this column to Baal Shamin, the good and bountiful god, for her life and the lives of her sons and brothers.

The tribe of the Bene Maazin is very well known at Palmyra, especially in the area of the city where they seem to have owned the temple of Baal Shamin itself (*BS*, p. 11). In A.D. 62 a member of the Bene Maazin offered an altar to Baal Shamin, Duraḥlun (*dwrḥlwn*), Raḥim (*rḥm*), and the Fortune (*gd*) of Yediʿebel (*BS* 23). From 67 to 103 or 104 great architectural activity took place in the sacred area of Baal Shamin. The porticoes were built with the generosity of many Palmyrenes, whose votive gifts, "offered to Baal Shamin and Duraḥlun, the good and bountiful gods," consisted of columns, architraves, and ceilings (Collart, *Architecture* pp. 53-60; *BS*, p. 29).

The temple of Baal Shamin (Pl. VII: 1) lay at the southern part of the main court of the sacred precinct. It was built around 131, according to an inscription written in Greek and Palmyrene on the bracket of a column that supported the bust of Male, a benefactor of the temple, and that proclaimed the tribute of the Senate to this illustrious citizen. The text reads as follows:

1. [Ἡ βουλὴ ϰαὶ] ὁ δῆ[μος]
2. Μαλην τὸν ϰαὶ Ἀγρίππα[ν]
3. Ιαραιου τοῦ Ρααιου γραμμ[α]-
4. τέα γενόμενον τὸ δεύτε-
5. ρον ἐπιδημίᾳ θεοῦ Ἁδρ[ι]-
6. ανοῦ, ἄλιμμα παρασχό[ν]-
7. τα ξένοις τε ϰαὶ πολείτα[ις].
8. ἐν πᾶσιν ὑπηρετήσαντα
9. τῇ τ[ῶν] στρατευμάτων
10. ὑπο[δοχ]ῇ ϰαὶ τὸν ναὸν
11. τὸν [τοῦ] Διὸς σ[ὺ]ν τῷ π[ρο]-
12. ναίῳ [ϰαὶ σὺν τ]αῖς ἄλλα[ις. .]τ[. . .ἐϰ τῶν] ἰδ[ίων]

1. mn twḥyt bwl' wdmws [ṣlm' dnh dy ml']
2. br yrḥy l[šmš] r'y dy hw' grmṭws dy trty'
3. wkdy 't[' mr]n hdrynws 'lh' yhb mšḥ'
4. lbny md[ynt' wl]'sṭr[ṭwm'] wl'ksny' dy 't'
5. 'mh [wprns mš]ryth b[k]l md'n wbn' hykl'
6. wprn'[yn wtṣb]yth k[l]h mn kysh lb'lšmn
7. wldrḥ[lwn wlgd]h d[hw] mn bny ydy'bl
8. byr[ḥ]n šnt [4]42

(*BS* 44.)

(*Greek*.) The Senate and People to Male, called Agrippa, son of Yarhai son of Raai, who became Secretary for a second time and, at the time the divine Hadrian stayed at (Palmyra), gave oil to the strangers and to the citizens, fully providing for the hospitable reception of the troops, and (built) the temple of Zeus with the pronaos . . . at his own expense.

(*Palmyrene*.) By decree of the Senate and People, this is the statue of Male (Agrippa) son of Yarhai (son of) Lishamsh Raai, who was Secretary for a second time and, when our lord the divine Hadrian came, gave oil to the citizens, to the troops, and to the strangers that came with him, taking care of the encampment in everything. And he built the temple and the pronaos, and the entire decoration at his own expense, to Baal Shamin and Duraḥlun and to the [Fortune] of the Bene Yediʿebel. In the month ..., the year 442 (130/131).

In lines 3, 5, and 6 of the Palmyrene section Milik (*Dédicaces*, p. 11) proposes restitutions different from those suggested by the editor. Line 7 is interpreted after Starcky in *Revue archéologique* 1974, 87.

The inscription makes a brief reference to the visit of the Emperor Hadrian to Palmyra around 129. After this visit the city received the title *Hadriana Palmyra* (Starcky, *Palmyre*, p. 38).

A remarkable difference between the two texts is that the Palmyrene *Baal Shamin and Duraḥlun* is rendered in Greek by Zeus, an equivalence which clearly tells that Baal Shamin and Duraḥlun were not conceived as two separate personalities. Ten out of nineteen inscriptions found in the temple of Baal Shamin mention his name followed by that of Duraḥlun, which most probably means *Du-Raḥlun*, i.e. "the One of Raḥle." Duraḥlun would have been the supreme god of the region of Raḥle, on Mt. Hermon (*Pagan God*, p. 131n). Baal Shamin and Duraḥlun are styled "good gods" (*BS* 21), "good and bountiful gods" (*BS* 7, 14), and twice they are mentioned together with the Bene Maazin, the sponsors of their cult in the city, for having erected statues to distinguished citizens (*BS* 40, 41). This association of Baal Shamin with Duraḥlun, the tribal god of the Arab group that migrated from the Anti-Lebanon to Palmyra, indicates that the god of the Raḥle region had been accepted by the priests of Baal Shamin because he was thought to be an avatar of the Lord of Heaven.

The devotees of Baal Shamin came to Palmyra at a time when the major ethnic groups had already settled themselves and their religious institutions there. The cult of Baal Shamin, however, is a familiar element in the pantheons of the ancient Near East. The god, a weather god, a patron of farmers and shepherds, was adored along the Canaanite coast in the second millennium B.C., and his cult became the religious patrimony of the Phoenicians in the beginning of the first millennium B.C. Before migrating to the oasis the Arab tribes of Palmyra exposed themselves to the religious practices of Phoenicians and Nabataeans, and the association at Palmyra of Baal Shamin and the god of Raḥle, on the Hermon, is to be considered a survival of the wanderings of the tribes in the west.

The cult of Baal Shamin was installed at Palmyra in an area where the land, or part of it at least, had already been acquired by the first settlers of the tribe of the Bene Maazin. This is revealed by the funerary inscription of Wahballat of A.D. 11, which gives the names of his forefathers up to the sixth generation (*BS* 60), by the honorific inscription of Zabdilah of A.D. 32 (*BS* 37), and by the votive inscription on the altar dedicated by Gaddarṣu in 115 to Allat (*RSP* 143). These three texts should be studied separately.

(1) *BS* 60: Funerary inscription found by the Swiss mission in 1956, carved on a block of soft limestone measuring 39 cm high by 29 cm wide. The text is written in an irregular and archaic script with some letters still keeping traces of red paint. The block formed part of a brick wall in the dromos of the tomb. The archaeological context is of the second century B.C. (Fellmann, *Die Grabenlage*, pp. 118-119). The architects of the sanctuary of Baal Shamin respected the area to the extent of incorporating it into the temenos of Baal Shamin. The inscription reads as follows:

1. byrḥ ’yr šnt 322
2. ptyḥ qbr’ dnh
3. w’br wwhblt br mtny br gdrṣw
4. br mtny br qynw br ‘dty br
5. ydyʿbl ptḥh w’brh
6. yhwh dkyr lʿlm’ hw
7. wbnwhy bṭb wdkyr ‘gylw br
8. mlkw br ḥyrn dky[r]
9. ‘d ‘lm’
10. br ydyʿbl rb’
11. ’bwy rb’ šlm

(*BS* 60.)

> In the month Iyyar, the year 322 (May, A.D. 11), this tomb was opened and cleaned up: Wahballat son of Mattanai son of Gaddarṣu son of Mattanai son of Qainu son of ʿAtai son of Yediʿebel opened it and cleaned it up. May he be remembered for ever. He and his children in well-being!

What follows in lines 7 to 11 has been written by a different hand, probably that of a contemporary:

> And remembered be ʿOgeilu son of Maliku son of Hairan. Remembered for ever be ... son of Yediʿebel the Elder, his grandfather. Peace!

The interpretation of this important inscription raises some questions. For *ʾbr* and the reading *wwhblt* (line 3), see Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, pp. 17-18, and BES 1976, no. 177. In line 9 after *ʿlmʾ* a few letters seem to be missing. In line 11 Dunant, the editor of the inscription, reads *ʾbwn rbʾ*, "notre père Rabba," but Milik's interpretation in *Dédicaces*, pp. 98-99, is followed here because it makes the text more coherent. According to the inscription *RSP* 143, the name *ʿdty* in line 4 is to be read *ʿty*.

The text places the Bene Maazin in the perspective of early Palmyra. Yediʿebel was their ancestor, who must have been alive in the first part of the second century B.C., probably the time when the tribe settled in the oasis. Yediʿebel is a name of Aramaic origin, and so is ʿAtai. Qainu, on the contrary, is a rare Arab name attested at Palmyra only among the Bene Maazin; it is frequent among the Nabataeans (as much as its modern synonymous family name Haddad); see Cantineau, *Le nabatéen*, II, p. 142. This information corroborates the western origin of the cult of Baal Shamin.

(2) *BS* 37: Console of a statue of hard limestone bearing an inscription of five lines:

1. ṣlmʾ dnh dy zbdlh br bryky
2. br nwrbl qynw dy mn bny
3. mʿzyn dy ʾqymw lh bny
4. mʿzyn lyqrh byrḥ šbṭ
5. šnt 343

(*BS* 37.)

> This is the statue of Zabdilah son of Barikai son of Nurbel Qainu who is from the Bene Maazin, which the Bene Maazin have erected to him in his honor, in the month Shebat, the year 343 (February, A.D. 32).

Qainu is an ancestor of Zabdilah, and his mention after the names of the father and grandfather permits him to be identified with the descendant of Yedi‘ebel listed in *BS* 60 (no. 1 above). Some eighty years later Qainu is still remembered among the ancestors of the Bene Maazin in the inscription found by the Polish mission in the area called the Camp of Diocletian.

(3) *RSP* 143: Three fragments of an altar of hard limestone. The text reads as follows:

1. byrḥ ’lwl šnt 426 knwn’ dnh qrb gdrṣw br
2. yrḥy br gdrṣw br ‘ty ‘l ḥywhy wḥyy bnwhy w’ḥwh
3. lmrt byt’ mṣb’ dy nṣb mtny br qynw br ‘ty rb’ ’b’
4. ’bwhy dy gdrṣw dnh [w]l’lhy’ klhn dy ytbyn lwth dy
5. [mrt byt’. . .]’ .b bkl ’tr klh l‘lm’

(*RSP* 143.)

> In the month Elul, the year 426 (September, 115) this altar has been offered by Gaddarṣu son of Yarhai son of Gaddarṣu son of ‘Atai for his life and the lives of his children and his brother to the Lady of the temple, the idol which Mattanai son of Qainu son of ‘Atai the Elder . . . erected, and to all the gods who dwell in the vicinity of [the Lady of the temple] . . . in the whole sanctuary for ever.

The inscription describes two genealogies which, if correlated with the one described in the inscription *BS* 60 of A.D. 11 (no. 1 above), appear to deal with members of the same family, the descendants of Yedi‘ebel. But there is a difference of a hundred years between the two texts, and this span is underlined by the mention of two ‘Atai: the great-grandfather of Gaddarṣu, and ‘Atai the Elder whose son Qainu and grandson Mattanai are mentioned in the text of A.D. 11. This Mattanai lived in the first part of the first century B.C.; and he is credited by the inscription of 115 (no. 3 above) with erecting the idol of the Lady of the temple, namely, Allat. The cult of the goddess was a patrimony of the family of Yedi‘ebel, and the inscriptions show that the Bene Maazin sponsored the cult together with that of Baal Shamin.

These three inscriptions suffice to prove that the Bene Maazin in the first half of the second century B.C. buried their ancestor in land contiguous to the area where the cella and the vestibule of the temple of Baal Shamin were built in 130/131. Here, too, they must have established the cult of the *Gad* (Fortune) of their ancestor Yediʿebel, for she is invoked as the "Gad of Yediʿebel" in company with Baal Shamin, Durahlun, and Raḥim on an altar dedicated in A.D. 62/63 by a member of the Bene Maazin (*BS* 23). An honorific inscription of 130/131, however, makes no mention of the Gad or Fortune of Yediʿebel (*CISem.* II, 3959; *BS* 44). The devotion to the patroness of the tribe probably merged into the cult of Astarte favored by the Bene Yediʿebel on several tesserae (*RTP* 95, 124, 586).

The character of supreme god assigned to Baal Shamin by the tribe of the Bene Maazin is made manifest in a most solemn manner by a bilingual inscription written on one of the monumental altars of the temple of Baal Shamin. The altar stands on a large platform in front of the cella. Its position is off the axis of the cella itself, but the monument seems to be in situ. This altar was the votive offering of four brothers: Auida, Malku, Yarhibola, and Hagegu, all four sons of Bōlemmeh and related to the Bene Soade. The inscription is dated February 7, 115 (*BS* 25), and records the dedication of the altar to [Διὶ Ὑψίστῳ] κα[ὶ ἐπ]ηκόῳ,, "Zeus Most High and the one who listens to prayers," which is translated in Palmyrene by *mare ʿalma*, "Lord of the World." Baal Shamin was, thus, a Lord of the World, but this title is not exclusively his, nor was it his sole right to be invoked as Zeus, as will be shown later.

Poseidon

"El, Most High, creator of heaven and earth," the biblical *ʾel ʿelyōn qoneh šamayim wāʾareṣ* (Genesis 14:19), is a divine figure present in the Canaanite and Phoenician pantheons. He appears at Karatepe and in North Africa (*ʾl qn ʾrṣ*; *KAI* 26 A III 18; 129:1) as well as at Hatra, where *qnh dy rʿʾ* is applied to Baal Shamin (*Syria* 40 [1963] 15, no. 23; Aggoula, *Berytus* 18 [1969] 90). According to a Latin inscription from Baalbek (*IGLS* 2743), a decurion of the *colonia* of Heliopolis dedicated a stele to the god

Connarus, an abridged form of the name Elqoneras. Another inscription, in Greek, mentions [K]όνναρος (*IGLS* 2841). At Palmyra, an altar inscription of June, A.D. 39, in Palmyrene and Greek, identifies the god with Poseidon:

1. byrḥ sywn šnt 350
2. [q]rb mqymw br khylw br zbdbl
3. [dy] mtqrh br zbydy dy mn pḥd bny
4. [gd]ybwl ‘lwt’ ’ln trtyhn
5. [l]’lqwnr’ ’lh’ ṭb’

(*Tadmorea* 31; *Syria* 19 [1938] 78-79.)

In the month Siwan, the year 350 (June, A.D. 39), Moqimu son of Kehilu son of Zabdibel who is called Bar Zebida, from the tribe of the Bene Gaddibol, offered these two altars to Elqonera, the good god.

The Greek text consists of two words: Ποσειδῶνι θεῷ. In the fifth line of the Palmyrene inscription, Cantineau read *’lqwnd’* without identifying the god. For the name *khylw*, see the remarks of Caquot in *RTP*, p. 174. The name most probably is of Aramaean origin.

The identification of *Elqonera* with Poseidon can be partly understood in the light of a bilingual inscription of Karatepe. Here, the god *’l qn ’rṣ* of the Phoenician text is equated in the Luwian hieroglyphs to ^{d}*a-a-ś*, i.e. the name of the Babylonian god Ea, whose realm was the waters. Poseidon, like El of Ugarit, had his abode in the middle of the oceans (*Pagan God*, p. 42, n. 82). In Canaanite *qoneh* means "creator," and this is the meaning of *qn* in Phoenician. But Poseidon is more the possessor of the earth than its creator. He embraces the earth as the waters in the ancient Near East were believed to do. This may explain Poseidon's epithet γαιήοχος. The Greek inscriptions also style him *Asphalios*, which is interpreted by Macrobius as "terram stabiliens" (*Sat.* 1.17.22). These reflections on Poseidon's personality may emphasize his character of god of solid ground, free from earthquakes, and cultivable.[3] The Aramaic term *qn’* means "to acquire" or "to possess" rather than "to create," and it may suit Poseidon's role better in a region, like that of Palmyra, far away from the ocean and with few scattered soils available.

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[3] The god receives yet another epithet: ἐννοσίγαιος, "earthshaker," which may have its Semitic counterpart in the title *marcod*, from *rqd*, "to dance," applied to the Baal of Deir el-Qala, a Phoenician high place about 10 km southeast of Beirut; see Starcky, *Syria* 26 (1949) 252-253.

Both the Semitic and the Greek names of the god indicate that the cult came to Palmyra from the west. A devotee of Poseidon, Moqimu son of Kehilu was a member of the Bene Gaddibol, who were an active group in the city with considerable business in the East. In 33 B.C. a member of the tribe, together with a certain Maliku son of Ramu, of the western tribe of the Komare, built a temple to Bel and Yarhibol at Dura-Europos (*Inv. D-E* 1). The commercial activity of the Bene Gaddibol at Vologesias in Parthian territory is described in another inscription (*CISem.* II, 3917; *Inv.* IX, 15). The western origin of the Bene Gaddibol is ascertained in some degree by the early presence of the name Baalatga borne by a female member of the tribe at the beginning of the first century of our era (Rodinson, *Syria* 27 [1950] 137-142; Stark, *PNPI*, p. 78). The name *bʿlt-gd*, "the Lady is (my) Fortune," is of Canaanite origin. It is attested in the onomastics of Palmyra at all times and can still be found on an altar dedicated by a Palmyrene couple in 268 (*CISem.* II, 4053). Its appearance at the time when the cult of Poseidon gained status in the city cannot but be significant. Of course, the devotion of the tribe to Poseidon continues to remain the factor that best relates the Gaddibol to the religious traditions of the west. The representation of a horse on a tessera (*RTP* 221) that bears the Semitic name of Poseidon, *ʾlqnrʿ*, stresses this connection. According to an obscure but firm Greek tradition, *Hippios* was one of Poseidon's epithets.

Elqonera kept his identity at Palmyra in much the same way that the Greek Poseidon differentiated himself from Zeus. On a rare coin of 174/173 B.C. from Aradus (Hill, *B. M. Coins, Phoenicia*, p. 20, no. 146) Poseidon and Zeus are represented separately, but this could not necessarily have prevented the Aradians from seeing the two images as two complementary aspects of the same supreme god. Rey-Coquais has rightly pointed out that the lack of theophorous names of Poseidon in the area seems to confirm the theory that Poseidon was believed to be not different from Zeus (*Arados*, pp. 234-235). In fact, both Zeus and Poseidon personified the ancient cult of El in the region.

The cult of Poseidon is hardly noticeable at Palmyra: he may be one of the deities portrayed on a beam relief in the temple of Bel, and he is certainly depicted in the floor mosaic of a house (Colledge, pp. 36 and 106). The latter, however, cannot have any bearing on the religious life of the city. The decorative purpose of this representation of Poseidon is similar to the decorative motifs provided by the myths of Dionysus or Ganymede (*Pagan God*, pp. 144-145). This obscure performance of Poseidon in the oasis all the more enhances the role of Bel, a true Zeus, in the pantheon of the city.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CULT OF THE SUN AND THE MOON AT PALMYRA

Yarhibol

The god was the patron of the spring of Efca at Palmyra (Pl. XII: 1, 2). He must have played this role since the Amorites, the first known inhabitants of the area, settled in the neighborhood of the spring. Yarhibol was the idol of the spring: *mṣb’ dy ‘yn’*, as an inscription on a relief of gypsum found at Dura-Europos states (*Inv. D-E* 33). The relief (Pl. X) shows Yarhibol in military dress, standing with his right hand raised to grasp a lance while the left grips the hilt of a sword. The god, his head radiate, has a crescent on his shoulders, but this symbol should not support the conclusion that Yarhibol was a lunar god: nimbus, rays, and crescent in the Palmyrene iconography may require a different explanation in each case. In the well-known relief in the Louvre Museum (Pl. VIII) that portrays the so-called triad of Baal Shamin the figure at the right of Baal Shamin wears a crescent *across* his radiate nimbus (Colledge, *Art of Palmyra,* p. 44). Here, the lunar character of the acolyte cannot be questioned since Baal Shamin is a cosmic god to whom the sun and the moon belong (*Pagan God,* pp. 141-142). This is not the case in other monuments where the crescent is represented *beneath* the radiate nimbus: for instance, on a Palmyrene relief, published by Seyrig in *Syria* 36 (1959) 58-60, pl. XI: 5, which shows the bust of a young god with a radiate head, a crescent on the shoulders, and a snake in the upper right corner of the panel. The most interesting feature of this monument is the representation of seven little figures with spears (?) engraved obliquely behind them. The figures occupy the lower register of the relief. At the bottom a Greek inscription of A.D. 30/31 identifies the god as Helios. The authors who have mentioned this relief have failed to compare the motif of the seven figures to a similar motif appearing on the Mithraic relief of Brigetio, in Pannonia; see *CIMRM*

1727. Here, below the familiar scene of Mithras Tauroctonus and separated by two horizontal lines, are the busts of seven figures that may represent the planets. The relief of Yarhibol from Dura-Europos (Pl. X) can also be compared to the figure of a young god with a radiate nimbus and a crescent on the shoulders represented on a medallion in the Cabinet des Médailles (Paris); see Drijvers, *Religion of Palmyra*, pl. XVII. According to the Palmyrene inscription incised to the left of the deity, the medallion was dedicated to Baal Shamin (Gawlikowski, *Semitica* 23 [1973] 121-123).

This last relief, like those of Yarhibol and Helios, has raised some questions among the scholars who contend that the crescent, a lunar symbol par excellence, could not accompany the Sun god. In fact, the radiate nimbus with the crescent forms a symbolic unity, and the whole may well stand for the heavens. At Commagene during the reign of Antiochus I (70-35 B.C.) Apollo and Helios were equated with Mithras (Waldmann, *Die Kommagenischen Kultreformen*, pp. 145-149). In the iconography of the last, the separate representation of the busts of the Sun and the Moon constitutes a familiar feature of the tauroctony. Dura-Europos, however, offers an interesting exception in an early Mithraic relief (Pl. XI) dated March, 169 (*Inv. D-E* 19). Above the scene of the killing of the bull both a star within a crescent and a rosette take the place of the usual busts of Sol and Luna (Perkins, *Art of Dura-Europos*, pp. 84-86). Whatever the meaning of the two astral symbols (moon and sun, or sun and moon and a star) may be, it is not unlikely that in a city as much influenced by Parthian culture as Dura-Europos (Pl. IX) the cosmic role of Mithras/Apollo was lent to Yarhibol, the Sun god of the triad of Bel at Palmyra. Centuries earlier the cosmic function of Sadrafa, a Semitic Apollo, was made apparent on the stele from Amrit (Pl. XXXIV) by the disk within the crescent that surmounts the figure of the deity (see below, p. 103).

In the inscription on the relief depicting Yarhibol (Pl. X) the interpretation of the term *mṣbʾ* as "idol" is confirmed by two inscriptions that mention "the priest of the idol of the spring" (*ʾpklʾ dy mṣb ʿynʾ*; *CISem.* II, 4064, 4065). In his capacity of Lord (*baal*/*bol*) the god appointed the superintendents of the spring (*RSP* 125). But his authority, exercised by means of oracles (*Inv.* XII, 44), transcended the territory of Efca: the god bore witness for some individuals, attested oaths, or allotted lands to gods and individuals (*Pagan God*, p. 112). From the inscriptions it is clear that Yarhibol was an ancestral or a national god. These expressions are precise and meaningful. In the first century B.C. Yarhibol had a shrine at Efca (ibid., p. 114, n. 39).

The preeminence given to the god by the Palmyrenes living in Dura-Europos is manifested by a dedicatory formula that consecrated one of the temples of the town to Bel and Yarhibol. The inscription reads as follows:

1. byrḥ sywn šnt 2
2. 79 hw zbdbwl
3. br bʿyḥw dy mn bny
4. gdybwl wmlkw br
5. rmw dy mn bny kmrʾ
6. ʿbdw hyklʾ lbl
7. wyrḥbwl

(*Inv. D-E* 1.)

In the month Siwan, the year 279 (June, 33 B.C.), Zabdibol son of *bʿyḥw*, of the [tribe of the] Bene Gaddibol, and Maliku son of Rumu, of the [tribe of the] Bene Komare, made the shrine to Bel and Yarhibol.

Nothing in the inscription allows for ascribing a subordinate rank to Yarhibol in the pantheon of Dura-Europos. Two hundred years later the archers of Palmyra stationed at Dura-Europos still worshiped him as the prominent patron of the spring of Efca (*Inv. D-E* 33).

Yarhibol's function in the civic life of Palmyra may have been shaded by his becoming a member of the official triad of the Palmyrene pantheon. In the triad of Bel, who was a cosmic god, Yarhibol represented the sun. Yet the texts, contrary to the artistic depictions of the god, tend to emphasize his divine role of judge. While the reliefs portray Yarhibol at the right of Bel together with Aglibol, who when he is on the other side of Bel stands for the moon, the inscriptions consistently mention Yarhibol's active presence in the daily life of the citizens. His civic responsibilities were never diminished throughout the entire history of the city. Examples are numerous.

In the southern portico of the temple of Bel a console of a statue exhibits the following inscription in Palmyrene:

1. ṣlmʾ dnh dy zbydʾ br šʿdw
2. tymšmš dy ʿbdt lh bwlʾ
3. [ly]qrh wshd lh yrḥbwl ʾlhʾ
4. brbnwt mrzḥwth dy kmry bl
5. byrḥ nysn šnt 428

(*CISem.* II, 3919; *Inv.* IX, 19.)

This statue is of Zebida son of Saʿdu Taimishamsh, which the Senate erected to honor him, and the god Yarhibol bore witness in his favor during his presidency of the symposia of the priests of Bel. In the month Nisan, the year 428 (April, 117).

This inscription reveals the complex relationship existing between the temple of Bel, in which the cult of the triad was officially maintained, and Yarhibol's indelible authority, exerted probably from his own temple at Efca. His prerogatives of judge and dispenser of benefits were exercised in his capacity as idol of the spring and not in that of acolyte of Bel. Yarhibol was a national god because the ancestors of Palmyra had made him their god and not because he personified the Sun god in the triad of the temple of Bel.

The tenor of other inscriptions is the same. An altar found in the vicinity of the spring bears the following text:

1. [b]rbnwt ʿynʾ dy bwlḥʾ br ḥyrn br
2. ʿtʿqb ḥwml dy ʾḥd yrḥbwl ʾlhʾ
3. bnʾ bnynʾ dnh dy ʿynʾ wktlʾ dy qd[m]
4. bt gbʾ wktlʾ dy brʾ wʿbd ktlʾ dy
5. [l]bnʾ byrḥ nysn šnt 516
6. wdkyr t[y]mʿʾ br mʿ[.] tymʿʾ blyd[ʿ]
7. [w]ḥyrn b[r] mqym[w mlk]w dy ʾḥd lh
8. bwlḥʾ dnh rb ʿyn
9. wʿbd bwlḥʾ dnh ʿltʾ dh mn kysh ʿl
10. ḥywhy wḥyy bnwhy wʾḥwhy

(*RSP* 127.)

While custodian of the spring Bolha son of Hairan son of Atteʿaqab Haumal, who was chosen by the god Yarhibol, erected the building at the spring and the wall that is in front of the pool, and the outer wall, and he made the brick wall (also). In the month Nisan, the year 516 (April, 205). Remembered be Taimʿa son of Mʿ[.] (son of) Taimʿa Beliada (and) Hairan son of Moqimu (son of) [Malik]u, whom Bolha, the superintendent of the spring, chose for himself (as his assistants). And Bolha ordered this altar at his own expense for his life and for the lives of his children and brothers.

One of the consoles of the Grand Colonnade has an inscription in Greek and Palmyrene honoring Julius Aurelius Zabdilah (Greek: *Zenobios*). This personage had been the strategos of Palmyra when the Emperor Alexander Severus visited the city in 229 and the Roman general Rutilius Crispinus brought in the legions (Greek: *vexillationes*). Moreover, Zabdilah had been supervisor of the market and saved the money of the fisc. The record of his civil service had been so outstanding that the god Yarhibol, Julius (Priscus) the prefect of the praetorium and the city itself bore witness in his favor (*Inv.* III, 22).

To students of the history of religion who are familiar with the personality of the Sun god in the Mesopotamian pantheon the function of judge exercised by Yarhibol at Palmyra will appear altogether coherent with his being the Sun god in the triad of Bel. In Mesopotamia the Sun god Shamash was portrayed on the stele of Hammurabi as a god of justice with the rod and the ring. Shamash was the guarantor of the Code inscribed on the stele. He committed law to kings and guided living creatures rightly, bore witness to oaths, and helped in administering appointments (Saggs, *Babylon*, pp. 371, 423). His symbol in Assyria was a winged disk and in Babylonia a disk with a four-pointed star and rays (ibid., p. 332, pl. 49). On a stele of Nabonidus Shamash is called the Lord of oracular decisions (*ANET*, Suppl., p. 126). At Palmyra, Yarhibol was also depicted as a radiate figure, for instance, on the tesserae (see *RTP* 118, 119, 120, 243, 245, and 246), on the reliefs of the Palmyrene (*Inv.* XII, 54, 56), and on the one (Pl. X) found at Dura-Europos (*Pagan God*, p. 110, n. 25; a good reproduction of this stele is also published in R. du Mesnil du Buisson, *Tessères et monnaies*, p. 212, pl. CXXIII).

But very likely Yarhibol did not acquire his character of a god of justice and of oracles as a result of being a solar deity in the pantheon of the city. The process must, rather, have been inverse: he was called upon to represent the Sun god because his ancestral role of god of the spring of Efca carried with it that of administering justice and emitting oracles. It is well known that the elders of a town were the judges in many public causes in ancient Israel as well as in Mesopotamia and among the Hittites.

Even though the reasons for which Yarhibol became the solar deity of Palmyra remain as yet conjectural, the fact is that the Arab Sun god Shamash, worshiped at Palmyra at least since the first century B.C., was not chosen by the priests of Bel to represent the Sun god at the main temple. To wonder about this fact is not a futile exercise, for the inscriptions, one after the other, show that Shamash was worshiped in the Arab quarter of the city from an early date. It seems, then, most pertinent to conclude that the priests of Bel must have been motivated in their decision by Yarhibol's prerogative of being the god of justice. On the other hand, the Arab immigration to Palmyra arrived when the Aramaean tribes from the west and the northwest had already settled in the oasis. Presumably the priests of Bel belonged to these ethnic groups.

Yarhibol's commitment to the civic life of the city was not shared by any other deity; within the frame of the Babylonian culture he better than any other divinity could match the traditional figure of the god administrator of justice personified by the Mesopotamian Sun god. Yarhibol's character as a solar deity is a conventional aspect of his cult at Palmyra and wherever the triad of Bel was worshiped. But, then, many tasks believed to be peculiar to certain gods or saints are based on a convention, because in the last analysis any theological system is an artifice as well.

Aglibol and Malakbel: the Moon God and the Sun God

The only documented feature of the cult of Aglibol is that he was consistently worshiped with Malakbel in a sanctuary at Palmyra called "the Holy Garden." A bilingual inscription of 132 has the expression ἱερὸν ἄλσος in Greek and *gntʾ ʾlym* in Palmyrene (*BS* 45). But an inscription of 17 B.C. commemorating the erection of a statue to a lady named ʿAtteʾemm already acknowledges this dual form of cult by stating that the statue had been offered by the gods Aglibol and Malakbel and by the Bene Komare, the tribe devoted to the cult of the two gods (*Inv.* XI, 84; Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 62).

The persistent association of Aglibol with Malakbel precludes the existence of a cult of his own at Palmyra. Yet the different pronunciation of the element *baal* in Agli*bol* and Malak*bel* clearly indicates that the original cult of each deity is to be traced back to an independent milieu. Their cults must have merged for reasons that seem to have a bearing on the seasonal cycle of nature. This is implied by the name of their temple as well as by the particular way the two gods are portrayed in the iconography. Aglibol and and Malakbel were indeed committed to vegetation and to the welfare of the flocks, which makes their cult more suitable to the mores of settled tribes than to those of nomads. Their companionship can be interpreted as an example of Phoenician and Aramaic influences over Palmyra: in the sanctuaries of the Levant pairs of deities were often worshiped together, for instance, Eshmun and Melqart or Reshef and Mukal in Cyprus, Astarte and Tanit at Sarepta in Phoenicia, Bel and Nebo at Daskyleion or among the Syriac-speaking communities of Edessa, and Sahar and Shamash at Nerab.[1]

These traditions must have affected the Bene Komare, the devotees of Aglibol and Malakbel. Both their initial name *Kohenite*, from Phoenician *kohen*, "priest," and the appellative *ʾlym* (a Phoenician word meaning "the gods" or "divine") used for their temple, the Holy Garden, point to the western origin of the tribe (Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, pp. 28, 36). And so did the cult of a pair of gods. The Bene Komare, then, ought to be considered a group ethnically independent from those Arab tribes who settled at the oasis of Palmyra after having formed part of the Nabataean wave in its periodic rolling toward North Syria (*Pagan God*, p. 105).

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[1] The extant epigraphical material does not support the conclusion that any two deities, when worshiped together, had their personalities merged into one. The associations of deities were cultic and not the result of metaphysical considerations; see Teixidor, *Met. Mus. Journal* 11 (1976) 63; BES 1977, no. 41.

The Holy Garden of Aglibol and Malakbel must have been one of the earliest temples of Palmyra. Its importance is manifested in the inscriptions. The temple was one of the four around which the religious and political life of the city concentrated. Each sanctuary belonged to a tribe, hence the importance of the four tribes under whose protection the sanctuaries could prosper. These four tribes presumably formed the nucleus of early Palmyra, otherwise their sanctuaries would not have lasted until the end of the second century A.D. (ibid., p. 107). The Bene Komare were, as their Aramaic name indicates, a sacerdotal tribe; whether they were known as the Kohenite or the Bene Komare the obvious meaning of their name is "the Sons of the priests." Equally prominent, the Bene Maazin, an Arab tribe, were dedicated to the cult of Baal Shamin. The Bene Mattabol, another tribe of western origin (*RTP*, p. 175), seem to have worshiped Arṣu (see pp. 92-94). The name of the fourth tribe is uncertain.

Of the four sanctuaries referred to in the inscriptions only that of Baal Shamin is known today. Neither the inscriptions nor the excavation reports allow for more than simple conjectures regarding the sites where the other three temples were located. These temples, however, must have been as ancient as the institution of the four tribes. The thesis of some scholars (Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 30; Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, p. 47) that the concept of the four tribes is an artificial creation of Roman Palmyra appears to be inconsistent with the evidence; the existence of four sanctuaries was a fact of national history that cannot be minimized. The sanctuaries were shrines of ancestral gods whose preeminence in the life of the city could not have been the result of an issue settled by a decree of the Palmyrene Assembly.

The most important text concerning the four sanctuaries is a long inscription in Greek and Palmyrene discovered by the Swiss archaeological mission in 1954 while excavating the temple of Baal Shamin. It makes a clear reference to the four temples as well as to the function of these temples in the national life.

1. Σοαδον Βωλιαδους τοῦ Σοαδου [εὐσεβῆ καὶ]
2. φιλόπατριν καὶ ἐν πολλοῖς καὶ [μεγάλοις]
3. καιροῖς γνησίως κ[αὶ φιλοτείμως]

4. παραστάντα τοῖς ἐμπό[ροις καὶ ταῖς]
5. συνοδί[α]ις καὶ τοῖς ἐν Οὐολογασιά[δι]
6. πολείταις, καὶ π[ά]ντοτε ἀφειδήσαντα
7. [ψ]υχῆς καὶ οὐσίας ὑπὲρ τῶν τῇ πατρίδι
8. διαφ[ε]ρόν[τ]ων καὶ διὰ τοῦτο δόγμασι
9. καὶ ψ[ηφίσ]μασι καὶ ἀνδριᾶσι δημοσίοις
10. καὶ ἐ[πιστολ]αῖς καὶ διατάγματι Ποβλικίου
11. Μαρκ[έλλου τοῦ διασ]ημοτάτου κυρίου
12. ὑπατικ[οῦ τετειμη]μένον, διασώσαντα
13. δὲ καὶ τὴν [προσφ]άτως ἀπό Οὐολογαισιά[δος]
14. παραγενομέν[ην συν]οδίαν ἐκ τοῦ
15. περιστάντος αὐ[τ]ὴν μεγάλου κινδύνου,
16. ἡ αὐτὴ συνοδία, [ἀρετ]ῆς καὶ μεγαλο-
17. φροσύνης [καὶ εὐσεβείας ἕνεκ]α, αὐτοῦ
18. ἀνδρ[ιάντας τέσσαρας ἀνέστησ]ε, ἕν[α]
19. μὲ[ν ἐ]νταῦθ[α ἐν ἱερῷ Διός], ἕνα δὲ
20. [ἐ]ν ἱερῷ ἄλσει, ἕνα δὲ [ἐ]ν ἱε[ρῷ] Ἄρεος
21. καὶ τὸν τέταρτον ἐν ἱερῷ Ἀταργάτειος
22. διὰ Αγεγου Ιαριβωλεους καὶ Θαιμαρσου
23. τοῦ Θαιμαρσου συνοδιάρχων· ἔτους
24. [γ]μυ′ μηνὸς Περιτίου

1. w[ ]
2. bd/rm[ ]
3. wb[ ]
4. wṭ’[ ]
5. mṣbt bšm bwl’ [wdm]s ’[ ]
6. wyqryn šgy’yn w’[pw]blwqyws mrql[ws]
7. hgmwn’ mrn b’g[rt’] wbdy [’]m šhd lh
8. wšbḥh wbḋ[y] s[y‘] šyr[t’] dy [sl]qt mn
9. ’lgšy’ bmd‘m [w]šwzbh mn qdns rb
10. d[y] hw tkh [h]nwn bny šyrt’ dh ‘bdw lh
11. ṣlm[y’ ’ln ’rb‘]’ lyqrh ’ḥd tnn bt
12. [b‘lšmn w’ḥd bt ’r]ṣw w’ḥd bgnt’ ’lym
13. [w’rb‘t’ bt ‘tr‘th brb]nwt šyrt’ ḥ[ggw b]r
14. [yrḥbwl’ wtymr]ṣw br tymrṣw [byrḥ šbṭ]
15. [šnt 4]43

(*BS* 45A and B.)

(*Greek.*) (1) (To honor) Soados son of Boliados son of Soados, a devotee and (2) a patriot who on many and important (3) occasions (and) in a generous and liberal manner (4) helped the merchants, the (5) trade caravans, and (his) (6) fellow countrymen who are in Vologesias; at no time did he spare (7) his energy or his wealth (8) for the sake of his country. And for this reason he was honored with decrees, (9) favorable votes of the Assembly, and public statues, (10) and with briefs and edicts of (11) the Most Illustrious Publicius Marcellus, Lord (12) of consular rank. And because he has saved (13-14) the caravan lately arrived from Vologesias from the (15) great danger that menaced it (16-17) the caravan itself on account of his valor, discernment, and piety (18) has erected to him four statues, one (19) here in the temple of Zeus (i.e. Baal Shamin), one (20) in the Holy Garden, another in the temple of Ares (21), and a fourth in the temple of Atargatis (22), through the agency of Hagegu son of Yarhibola and Taimarṣu son of (23) Taimarṣu, the chiefs of the caravan. Year (24) 443, in the month Peritios (February, 132).

(*Palmyrene.* Lines 5 ff.) ... statues in the name of the Senate and the Assembly of the People [...] and many honors, and Publicius Marcellus, the governor, our Lord, by edicts both bore witness for him and praised him because he helped in everything the caravan that went up to Vologesias and saved it from the great danger that threatened it, and they, the members of this caravan, erected these four statues to him, in his honor: one, here, in the temple of Baal Shamin; one, in the temple of Arṣu; one, in the Holy Garden; and the fourth in the temple of Atargatis, under the command of the chiefs of the caravan Hagegu son of Yarhibola and Taimarṣu son of Taimarṣu. In the month Shebat, the year 443 (February, 132).

Line 7: The spelling *šhd* is unusual at Palmyra; most of the inscriptions have *shd*. Line 8: *šbḥ* is not found elsewhere at Palmyra. Here, it is an intensive form. The term *šbyḥyt* is an adverb ("praiseworthily"); see *Inv.* X, 44. For the verb *sy*ʿ, see Cantineau, *Grammaire*, p. 85. Line 10: *tk* is to be related to Syriac *tak*, "to oppress"; the other form, *twk*, pa. *tayyek*, "to coerce," seems less appropriate to explain Palmyrene *tk*.

The Palmyrene text is heavily damaged and shorter than the Greek section, but it does not depart from it in any important point. It is worth noticing that Palmyrene *hgmwn*ʾ renders Greek ὕπατικος; in the Tariff of Palmyra *hygmwn*ʾ is translated by ἡγεμών, whose charge was to preside over all kinds of contracts and to impose the fiscal law in the city (Seyrig, *Syria* 22 [1941] 156-159). A *hgmwn*ʾ was really a *legatus* (Bertinelli Angeli, *Nomenclatura* *pubblica e sacra,* pp. 124-125). In 258, however, the Greek title λαμπρότατος ὕπατικος borne by Septimius Odainath, the future king of Palmyra, was translated into the Palmyrene expression *nhyr’ hpṭyk’* (*BS* 52; *CISem.* II, 3945). A change in the use of the title ὕπατικος is to be mentioned; first it meant the governor of consular rank as distinguished from governors of praetorial rank, but later on it simply meant governor (Ingholt, *Syria* 13 [1932] 283).

Soados son of Boliados was a man of great distinction and accomplishment. A city entirely devoted to trade with Mesopotamia, Syria, and the Persian Gulf could not fail to honor those who helped the caravans cross the desert safely. Copious information about the Palmyrene trade abroad can be found in the honorific inscriptions in the Agora at Palmyra published by Starcky (*Inv.* X). The texts cover the period from 30 or 31 to 218 of our era; they were written on the consoles of the columns of the marketplace below the statues of persons honored by the city. Palmyra was a commercial center and had a well-organized system of caravans. Often votive inscriptions were made invoking protection for the caravans by the divine guardians. These true angels of the desert were worshiped in pairs, as will be seen later. Aglibol and Malakbel never exercised this role of guardians, for they were patrons of the settled life.

In a bilingual inscription in the Capitoline Museum in Rome a Palmyrene offered "a standard in silver" to Aglibol and Malakbel, πατρῴοις θεοῖς (*CISem.* II, 3902). At least since the first century A.D. these "ancestral gods" had had their symposia at Palmyra, where the sacred repasts (*mrzḥ’*; *thiasos*) could be celebrated in their honor. A Greek inscription on a fragment of entablature (Starcky, *Syria* 26 [1949] 60) and a bilingual text on fragments of an architrave from the Agora in Palmyra (*Inv.* X, 144) refer to the room where these meals were held. A symposium was a familiar feature of temples in the Levant (Starcky, *Syria* 26 [1949] 62-67). A text of A.D. 34 even gives a list of the members forming a thiasos devoted to Aglibol and Malakbel:

1. [byrḥ šbṭ šnt 345 ʿlt' dh [ʿbdw]
2. [bny m]rzḥ' ʾln lʿglbwl wlmlkbl ʾlh[y']
3. [wh]by br ʿtnwry ʿwdw wḥggw br zbdlh knr'
4. [wn]bwzbd br mlkw mtn' wtymw br ʿgylw rbbt
5. [w]mlkw br yrḥbwl' ḥty wyrḥbwl' br tymrṣw
6. ʾbrwq wzbdbwl br ydyʿbl ʾlhw wʿgylw br
7. nwry zbdb(w)l wmlkw br mqywm tymʿmd

(*CISem.* II, 3980.)

In the month Shebat, the year 345 (February, A.D. 34). This altar [was erected] to Aglibol and Malakbel, the gods, (by the following) members of the thiasos:

Wahbai son of ʿAtenuri ʿAudu
Hagegu son of Zabdilah Komra
Nebuzabad son of Maliku Mattane
Taimu son of ʿOgeilu Rabibat
Maliku son of Yarhibola *ḥty*
Yarhibola son of Taimarṣu *ʾbrwq*
Zabdibol son of Yediʿebel Alihu
ʿOgeilu son of Nurai Zabdibol
Maliku son of Moqimu Taimʿamad.

The fact that the name of each member is accompanied by the name of his ancestor gives the list the character of an official document. The names of the members also indicate that Arab families and families of Phoenician or Aramaic extraction were intermingled. This sociological fact is of great interest because it demonstrates that the cult of Aglibol and Malakbel, a local phenomenon, could attract Arab elements which were alien to the original western tribes that patronized the Holy Garden. And by the time the sacred banquets were celebrated by the members of the thiasos all ethnic divisions must already have been blurred.

The nine members formed a liturgical group over which the chief of the thiasos presided. Nothing is unusual in this type of religious gathering. The number nine recalls the assemblies of the members of the Qumran community, as Milik has pointed out (*Dédicaces*, p. 119). According to the scroll of the Rule (6.3-4) and the Damascus Document (12.22-13.3), whenever ten members of the community were assembled a priest had to be present. Josephus made a similar observation regarding the Essenes (*Jewish War* 2.146).

Even though the temple of the two gods has not been found, two monuments of unequal importance represent it. One, on a tessera (*RTP* 162), shows two altars; upon the left one there is an ox; at the right, near the other altar, there is a cypress. The second monument is a frieze in the peristyle of the cella of the temple of Bel (Pl. XIII: 1). The beam relief portrays the sanctuary of the two gods. This representation has been described in the following terms: "To our right is a Corinthian temple, hung with a cluster of dates. Before it stands ʿAglibôl, frontally, in a striking military attire. His cuirass is moulded in Hellenistic fashion, with even the navel marked, and over it is pinned the conventional short cloak. But the shoulder-tabs are unmodishly long, and his limbs are covered by an oriental long-sleeved tunic and leggings. Over an altar heaped with fruits of the earth he clasps the hand of a fellow god. Two other reliefs picture this pair, and the attributes agree: ʿAglibôl's partner is certainly Malakbel. Unlike his companion, Malakbel has no cuirass, lance or nimbus: he is here in agrarian guise. Behind him stands a second altar (also heaped with produce) carved with a goat, and shadowed by a sacred cypress with a lopped branch. To our left are two damaged figures in profile, dressed in 'boiler suits' [coveralls]—attendants, surely" (Colledge, *Art of Palmyra*, p. 36, pl. 19).

The friendly gesture of clasping hands suits the two gods, who are referred to in some texts as "the Holy Brothers" (*CISem.* II, 4001, 4002; Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 195). It is also depicted on a stele in the Capitoline Museum (*CISem.* II, 3902) and in a relief (Pl. XIII: 2) found at Khirbet Ramadan (*PNO*, pl. 36:1). On the stele in the Capitoline Museum the artist has made a gracious reference to the Holy Garden by making the gods shake hands in front of a cypress. The motif became popular outside Palmyra because the gods were very likely represented clasping each other's hands in their temple in the city. These two monuments portray Aglibol and Malakbel similarly: Aglibol with a radiate head, dressed as a Roman soldier, wears cuirass and chlamys and holds a spear in his left hand. Malakbel wears a mantle and a tunic over Parthian trousers which are tucked into the boots. The peasant look of Malakbel in the Capitoline Museum contrasts with the martial aspect of Aglibol, all the more enhanced by the large crescent which is attached to his shoulders.

There is a brief reference to the sanctuary itself in a Greek inscription found in 1935 in the area of the temple of Bel (Seyrig, *Syria* 18 [1937] 372-374). Lines 3 and 4 mention two columns in marble, their entablature, and the ceiling of the Holy Garden. Another element of the sanctuary was the bath which, according to a Greek inscription of August, 182, was paid for by Thomaleke daughter of Haddudan of the tribe of the Bene Komare (ἀπὸ φυλῆς Χωνειτῶν; Ingholt, *Berytus* 3 [1936] 109-112; Milik, *Dédicaces*, pp. 31-32; Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, p. 50). The inscription reports that the bath cost 2,500 denarii.

Reliefs, tesserae, and paintings at both Palmyra and Dura-Europos represent Aglibol beside Bel as a Moon god. But this fact casts hardly any light on the personality of the god for the period prior to the inauguration of the temple of Bel at Palmyra in A.D. 32. The etymology of the name Aglibol is uncertain: the suggested translation of the element *ʿgl* as "calf" is likewise of no help in disclosing the god's personality (see p. 46). The decision of the priests of Bel to choose Aglibol for the role of acolyte of the cosmic god Bel seems to want a theological rationale. A careful examination of the religious traditions of North Syria, however, may clarify the choice of the priests of Bel.

To be sure, the association of Aglibol with Malakbel antedates the establishment of the triad of Bel. And it is worth noticing that the reliefs of Palmyra portraying the two Holy Brothers always attribute to Aglibol the role of leader of his companion. The iconography here is consistent with the North Syrian traditions.

The cult of the Moon god and the Sun god enjoyed the favor of North Syrians at least from the beginning of the first millennium B.C. Their names were frequently called upon in the Aramaic inscriptions of Zinjirli (Samʾal), Harran, and Nerab. Historians usually fail to stress the importance of this double cult in the genesis of the cult of Aglibol and Malakbel. The preeminence of the Moon god over the Sun god was well established in Mesopotamia and equally cherished by the Aramaeans of North Syria.

The symbol of the Moon god was the crescent that in Mesopotamia appears with its convexity at the bottom, thus assimilating the crescent to a boat navigating across the skies. This concept may be behind the divine name Rakib-El, the dynastic god of the kings of Sam'al (*KAI* 24:16, 202:7, 214, 216:1-3). Rakib-El (or Rakkab-El) means "Charioteer of El" and most probably refers to one of the functions of the Moon god. An inscription which is carved across the lower portion of the statue of Hadad erected by Panamu I invokes Rakib-El and Shamash together after having mentioned the supreme gods Hadad and El (*KAI* 214:3, 22). This monument dates from the middle of the eighth century B.C. Some twenty years later Barrakib son of Panamu II was king of Sam'al and erected a statue to his father. The inscription on it is votive, but the new monarch uses it to recount the political career of Panamu (*KAI* 215). Line 2 says that "there was a curse on his father's house (*'lh hwt bbyt 'bwh*), but the god Hadad stood with him" (Gibson, *SSI*, p. 79). Following the religious traditions of his family, Barrakib invoked Rakib-El, "lord of the dynasty," and Shamash after Hadad and El. A few years later, however, he had another inscription (*KAI* 216) carved alongside a relief that represented him in Assyrian dress. Here, the monarch asserts that "because of my father's righteousness and my own righteousness, my lord Rakib-el and my lord Tiglathpileser seated me upon my father's throne" (Gibson, *SSI*, pp. 87, 90). And on the stele of Harran (*KAI* 218) Barrakib proclaims his faith in the Moon god by declaring that "his lord" is Baal of Harran. This Baal is, of course, Sin, who possessed a shrine at Ur and whose cult at Harran was fervently patronized by Nabonidus and his mother some two hundred years later.

The religious traditions of North Syria are documented by the various stelai of Nabonidus. One of them is the tomb inscription of the mother of the Babylonian king. She was a fervent devotee of Sin. Born in "the twentieth year of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria" (668-627), she lived one hundred and four years "in good health," enjoying "an exalted position and a famous name in the country."

She died in "the ninth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon" (555-539). By the middle of the seventh century B.C. the cult of the Moon god had been flourishing in Harran, but "in the sixteenth year of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon" (625-605), the city of Harran was captured and the temple of Sin destroyed. The mother's inscription gives a brief but eloquent account of the tragic event: "Sin, the king of all gods, became angry with his city and his temple, and went up to heaven and the city and the people in it became desolate" (quotations from *ANET*, Suppl., pp. 560-561).

After a period of abandonment Nabonidus restored the Harranian cult to its former splendor. On a stele discovered in 1956 in the ruins of the Great Mosque in Harran is an inscription that narrates the revelation of the god to the monarch. The text describes in a few lines the condition of Shamash, the Sun god, in relation to Sin. Shamash is portrayed as "the lord of oracular decisions, without whom no mouth can be opened or shut;" he executes the commands of "his own father, the Divine Crescent," and together with Ishtar, Adad, and Nergal, he was "appointed by Sin" to watch over the well-being of the king (*ANET*, Suppl., pp. 562-563).

The Moon god has the same prominent role in the early seventh century B.C. at Nerab, as the famous inscriptions of two priests of the local Moon god show. Their Akkadian names are theophorous of Sin: *Sin-zer-ibni*, "Sin has created a seed," and *Si’-gabbari*, "Sin is a warrior." Although the names of the priests retain the Mesopotamian name of the Moon god, the priests themselves invoked the god under his Aramaic name, *šhr*, Sahar, which in Aramaic can be translated as "the Vigilant," a good epithet for the moon. In Arabic *šahr* means "month" or "new moon," from a root signifying to make well known, to annonce, etc.

The inscription of Sin-zer-ibni (Pl. XIV: 1) reads as follows:

1. šnzrbn kmr
2. šhr bnrb mt
3. wznh ṣlmh
4. w’rṣth
5. mn ’t
6. thns ṣlm’

7. znh w’rṣt’
8. mn ’šrh
9. šhr wšmš wnkl wnšk yshw
10. šmk wšrk mn ḥyn wmwt lḥh
11. ykṭlwk wyh’bdw zr‘k whn
12. tnṣr ṣlm’ w’rṣt’ z’
13. ’ḥrh ynṣr
14. zy lk

(*KAI* 225.)

Sin-zer-ibni, priest of Sahar in Nerab, deceased. This is his image and his sarcophagus. Whoever you are (who) carry this statue and the sarcophagus away from this place, may Sahar and Shamash and Nikkal and Nushk expunge your name and your place from among the living, make you die an evil death, and cause your seed to perish. But if you respect the image and the sarcophagus may posterity respect what is yours.

The inscription of Siʾ-gabbari (Pl. XIV: 2) is richer than Sin-zer-ibni's in details. There is, for instance, the acknowledgement that longevity constitutes a divine bestowal upon the individual (Tawil, *Orientalia* 43 [1974] 48-50, 63-65) and that the grantor of the gift is Sin. The inscription runs as follows:

1. š’gbr kmr šhr bnrb
2. znh ṣlmh bṣdqty qdmwh
3. šmny šm ṭb wh’rk ywmy
4. bywm mtt pmy lʾtʾḥz mn mln
5. wb‘yny mḥzh ’nh bny rb‘ bkwn
6. y whwm ’thmw wlšmw ‘my m’n
7. ksp wnḥš ‘m lbšy šmwny lm‘n
8. lʾḥrh lthns ʾrṣty mn ’t t‘šq
9. wthnsny šhr wnkl wnšk yhb’šw
10. mmtth w’ḥrth t’bd

(*KAI* 226.)

Siʾ-gabbari, priest of Sahar in Nerab. This is his image. Because of my righteousness before him he gave me a good name and prolonged my days. In the day I died my mouth was not bereft of words, and with my eyes I gazed upon the children of the fourth generation: they wept for me and were deeply distraught. They did not lay with me any vessel of silver or bronze: with my shroud they laid me, lest my sarcophagus be plundered in the future. Whoever you are who do wrong and rob me, may Sahar and Nikkal and Nushk cause him to die a miserable death and may his posterity perish!

For line 5 the new translation proposed by Gibson has been followed; see *SSI*, p. 97. The shift from second to third person in the final lines is a feature of the imprecatory style. Examples are numerous; see Gevirtz, *Vetus Testamentum* 11 (1961) 137-158. A striking instance is provided by the recently found stele from Daskyleion: "I adjure you by Bel and Nebo, whoever passes this way let no one disturb (my tomb)"; see Cross, *BASOR* 184 (Dec., 1966) 9, and Gibson, *SSI*, p. 157.

Babylonian and Aramaic inscriptions alike show that the preeminence of the Moon god was an established fact in North Syria. Thus the preeminence of Aglibol over Malakbel in their temple at Palmyra maintains an unabated cultic tradition. In the light of this same tradition it can plausibly be conjectured that the element *ʿgl* in the name Aglibol may derive from a root meaning to be round or to roll. In Jewish-Aramaic and in Syriac *ʿglt*ʾ means "chariot." *Aglibol* may then be translated as "the Chariot of Bol." This certainly fits Aglibol's personality at Palmyra, where the theological concept of a supreme god was firmly entrenched in the liturgy of the temple of Bol/Bel. Here, Aglibol would have simply exerted his traditional function of Moon god, and his enthronement beside Bel sanctioned his ancient role of Moon god in the Holy Garden. A few tesserae mention or represent Aglibol and Yarhibol together: *RTP* 156, 244, 245, maybe 246; *TM*, pl. X (the representation of Heracles on the reverse of tessera 245 proposed by the editors does not go undisputed). The tesserae were obviously made to portray the two gods as the acolytes of Bel. Yarhibol is shown with the head adorned by the sun's rays, whereas Aglibol, usually not shown as radiate, wears the crescent on his shoulders (*TM*, pl. X). The tesserae that depict Aglibol and Malakbel together seem to be richer in iconographical details as well as in textual information than those of Yarhibol and Aglibol. They will be studied later once the personality of Malakbel in the Palmyrene pantheon has been considered.

Malakbel often appears in the monuments without a halo or, as on a stele in the Capitoline Museum, may even have a timid reserve that does not accord with his divine rank (*CISem.* II, 3902). On the famous altar in the same Capitoline Museum (ibid., 3903), to be dated in the middle of the third century of our era, Malakbel is represented in three different ways (Pls. XV-XVI): as a little child stemming from the foliage of a cypress and carrying a kid on his shoulders; riding in the chariot of the Sun, drawn by griffins; and as the bust of a youth with a radiate halo, who emerges from behind an eagle. The inscriptions in Latin and Palmyrene read as follows:

Soli sanctissimo sacrum. Ti. Claudius Felix et Claudia Helpis et Ti. Claudius Alypus fil(ius) eorum votum solverunt libens merito Calbienses de coh(orte) III

1. ‘lt’ dh lmlkbl wl’lhy tdmr
2. qrb ṭbrys qlwdys plqs
3. wtdmry’ l’lhyhn šlm

(*CISem.* II, 3903).

(*Palmyrene.*) This is the altar (which) Tiberius Claudius Felix and the Palmyrenes offered to Malakbel and the gods of Palmyra. To their gods. Peace!

In the Latin inscription *Calbienses* most probably stands for the name of a tribe, the Bene Kalbe. The personal name *Kalba* is known in the Northwest Semitic area; see Stark, *PNPI*, p. 92. The Palmyrene text, less explicit in a city where Palmyrene must have been practically unknown, simply translates *Calbienses* into "Palmyrenes."

The Palmyrene text identifies Sol Sanctissimus with Malakbel. Here, the scenes represented on the altar have a unique value because the monument was offered to the god by Palmyrenes who were certainly acquainted with the traditions of Palmyra. This nostalgic attachment to the traditions of their hometown clearly presents Malakbel both as a solar deity and as a god of vegetation and nature. A third characteristic of his personality is disclosed by his name: *Malakbel,* "the Angel of Bel." The epigraphical material at hand does not permit distinction between Malakbel's condition as a solar deity and his role as the angel or messenger of Bel. The cult of the angels throve among the Semites of the first millennium B.C. (*Pagan God,* pp. 14-15, 38), and consequently the cult of Malakbel ought to be partly explained within the frame of that prevailing devotion. But the simultaneous function of Sun god places the Angel of Bel in a cultural tradition different from the one that made Yarhibol an acolyte of Bel or the one that brought the Arab Sun god Shamash into the oasis. The genesis of Malakbel's cult at Palmyra can, of course, be explained by borrowing arguments from Mesopotamian and Egyptian texts that validate the coexistence in Malakbel's personality of his three functions of solar deity, god of vegetation, and angel of Bel. North Syrian tradition, however, can lead the analysis of Malakbel's personality onto more solid ground.

At Harran, and certainly at Nerab, the Sun god has the role of a lesser god; he is the son of the Divine Crescent and an appointee of the Moon god "to watch over the well-being" of the king (see above, p. 44). The theological conception that granted the Moon god the first rank in the divine hierarchy, making the Sun god his subordinate, is the one adopted in the temple of Aglibol and Malakbel at Palmyra. The name *Aglibol* which the Moon god received at Palmyra is consistent with the religious tradition that describes him as "the Charioteer of El." On the contrary, the origin of the name *Malakbel* which the Syrian Sun god was given at Palmyra remains unknown. Under *Malakbel* or *Malakbol* (*Inv.* X, 144) a true Sun god was hidden. This tradition must have been fully understood and preserved at Palmyra, for it is unlikely that the Palmyrenes living at Rome invented the cult of Malakbel Sol Sanctissimus. What was new here was the emphasis, a tribute to the religious fashions of Rome.

The cult of the sun at Rome reached its climax under the Emperor Elagabalus who, at his native Emesa, had been a priest of the local *Elahgabal,* "the god Mountain" (*'lh' gbl*: Starcky, *MUSJ* 49 [1975-1976] 504), a god assimilated to Helios in later times. The heliolatry propagated by Elagabalus succeeded in merging the cult of the emperors with that of Sol Invictus. In 274 under Aurelianus the cult of the sun became a state religion (Cumont, *Religions orientales,* p. 106). These religious fashions came into the western Mediterranean from Syria. The Arab cult of the sun which had flourished in many Syrian cities during the Greco-Roman period was transformed by the Roman philosophers, and the sun became the ever-present image of the intelligible God. This is clearly stated in Julian's Oration 4.

Julian conceives of the sun in three ways: first, the visible sun; second, the intelligible world, and third, the supraintelligible or the idea of Being, "to use Plato's name for him, the Good.... This uncompounded cause of the whole," Julian continues, "reveals to all existence beauty, and perfection, and oneness, and irresistible power...." There is "an equal and identical dominion of Helios and Zeus over the separate creation.... From [Helios] are we born." [2]

Julian's hymn to the sun was not the first one to be recited in the Near East. The hymn to the sun disk, the Aton, was composed during the reign of Amunhotep IV (Akenaton) who so fervently espoused the worship of the sun. The theology of this composition, however, is different. A monotheistic tone permeates it all: "Sole god, without another beside you.... You have made a far-off heaven in which to rise in order to observe everything you have made." [3] The text recalls the Phoenician conception of Baal Shamin dwelling in the most elevated region of the world, above the planets and the stars (*Pagan God,* p. 28).

The Romans clearly misunderstood the Semitic background of the cult. A good description of that rationalistic manipulation that transformed old Near Eastern traditions into fashionable Roman euphoria can be found in the writings of a modern rationalist, Ernest Renan, whose unsympathetic views of the Semites are too well known. In a letter to M. Berthelot he says: "Before religion reached the point where it proclaimed that God should be sought in the Absolute and the Ideal, that is to say, outside the world, one cult only was reasonable and scientific and that was the cult of the sun." [4]

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[2] *Oration* 14 132D, 144BC, and 152A; trans. W. C. Wright, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass., 1913), I, pp. 359, 393, 417.

[3] Trans. W. K. Simpson in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, and Poetry,* pp. 292 and 294.

A Roman of the third century A.D. might have agreed with the statement that the sun has a preeminent role in the cosmic system, but some of his fellow citizens did not know with certainty whether the Sun god was to be adored as Jupiter or as Sol (*Hist. aug.*: *Carac.* 11.7; *Heliogab.* 17.8). Renan distorted the facts as much as those who believed that the Syrian Sun god was a Jupiter had done. Among the Semites the Sun god never possessed the rank of a supreme deity (Seyrig, *Syria* 48 [1971] 339, 344, 364-365). The Palmyrenes who in the middle of the third century and under the influence of the Roman fervor worshiped Malakbel as Sol Sanctissimus probably did not grasp the theological differences separating their hometown cults from the Roman ones. What is relevant in their dedication is that they persisted in acknowledging Malakbel—and not Yarhibol—as an ancestral Sun god.

The tesserae of Aglibol and Malakbel afford some information on the cult of the two gods. One, for instance, shows the temple of the Holy Garden (*RTP* 162); another gives a symbolic representation of it: a palm branch and foliage (*RTP* 157); a third tessera (*RTP* 158) depicts a bunch of grapes with tendrils and on the obverse has three short lines that read: *ʿglbwl / wmlkbl / ywm 12*, "Aglibol and Malakbel. Day 12." Several tesserae bear dates that must correspond to the festive days on which sacred repasts were celebrated. Thus, *RTP* 63: *bl nysn*, "Bel. (Month of) Nisan," which probably means that the tessera gave access to the *marzeaḥ* celebrated on the occasion of the New Year. *RTP* 93: *ʾgn bl wʾblʿly / ḥnktʾ wbny ḥšš*, "Symposium of Bel and *Abulʿali*. / The dedication. And the Bene Hashash." This tessera was issued to celebrate the dedication of the temple of Bel on April 6, A.D. 32, Milik believes (*Dédicaces*, p. 111), but most probably it only commemorates the anniversary of that dedication. On *RTP* 720, 721, 997: *ywm 8*,

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[4] E. Renan, *Dialogues et fragments philosophiques* (Paris: Calmann-Levy, n.d.), p. 168. The letter to Berthelot is dated in August, 1863. Renan met Marcelin Berthelot, the scientist, in November, 1845 and their friendship lasted Renan's lifetime. "You were twenty-eight and I was twenty-two when we began to think together" Renan wrote later in dedicating one of his books to his friend.

ywm 7, *ywm 10*, respectively, the meaning of the dates is uncertain.

In the case of the third tessera of Aglibol and Malakbel, "Day 12" refers to a particular day during the festivities organized in the month of February. Milik has rightly drawn attention to two texts that honor Aglibol and Malakbel in February. The first one is a bilingual inscription dated February 25, 198. The Greek text was published by Ingholt in *Syria* 13 (1932) 278-289. It is incomplete, but the Palmyrene text, although shorter, makes up for the missing section (Milik, *Dédicaces*, pp. 36-37). The inscription states that the Senate and the Assembly of the People (*mn twḥyt bwlʾ wdms*) decreed the erection of four statues in honor of Aelius Borra son of Titus Aelius ʿOgeilu the strategos, one in each of the four temples of the four tribes. The inscription also commemorates the erection of a statue in the temple of the Bene Komare (Greek: *Khoneitai*). Perhaps the priests of the Holy Garden made the event take place on the day they observed the feast of Aglibol and Malakbel. The second text, cited on page 40, commemorates the erection of an altar by the members of the thiasos of Aglibol and Malakbel, who presumably augmented the dedication with the celebration of a sacred banquet in February. The text unfortunately does not indicate the day of the month.

There is another reference to the festivities held at Palmyra in honor of the two gods on tesserae *RTP* 160 and 161; their interpretation, however, is controversial. The obverse means: "Aglibol and Malakbel"; the reverse reads: *m 1 ḥ 1* (*RTP* 160) and *m 1 ḥ 1 ʿ 1* (*RTP* 161), i.e. "one allowance of *m*[*šḥʾ*], oil," "one allowance of *ḥ*[*mrʾ*], wine," "one allowance of ʿ[*glʾ*], veal." This is the interpretation proposed by the editors (*RTP*, p. 23). A different reading, based on a new interpretation of the signs as *mzḥ 1* (160) and *mzḥ* 6 (161), is proposed by Milik (*Dédicaces*, p. 156). But in this reading the last sign in tessera 161 would be left undeciphered. Moreover, the proposed etymology of *mzḥ* as a derivative of Syriac *zâḥ*, meaning "procession" or the like, is altogether farfetched.

The lapidary inscriptions as well as the short texts on the liturgical tesserae reveal that the cult of Aglibol and Malakbel stemmed from a tradition different from the ones that had Yarhibol and Aglibol installed as acolytes of Bel representing the sun and the moon or that had Shamash worshiped as the Sun god of the Arab tribes in the temple of Allat (pp. 64-65). Whether these traditions conflicted with each other or not is unknown. But, whereas the cult of the Moon god was addressed exclusively to Aglibol, that of the Sun god seems to have been of a complex nature. This was partly due to the presence of syncretistic doctrines that presented the sun as the king of all other stars and therefore the master of the world (Cumont, *Religions orientales*, p. 123). This latent doctrine surfaces in three funerary Palmyrene inscriptions in which it is wished that the soul of the deceased will achieve fulfillment "in the Sun" (*dh mwlyʾ bšmš*; *Inv.* VIII, 6, 8, 37; Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 193). The Palmyrenes, however, could not have seen in Yarhibol, Malakbel, and Shamash three different Sun gods. Even though the three deities were styled "ancestral," each one was so for a different reason and in a different cultural context (*Inv.* X, 85; *CISem.* II, 3902, 3978). Very likely Shamash alone impersonated the Sun god to the Arab ancestors of the Palmyrenes, Yarhibol and Malakbel having been associated with the sun only by the theological reasoning of the priests. Thus, the ancestral character that the three possessed must have conveyed different religious responses from the faithful. Beyond this point it seems impossible to ascertain the full meaning of the cult of the Sun god among the Palmyrenes.

CHAPTER THREE

THE GODDESS OF PALMYRA AND HER ASSOCIATES

Allat

In the mid-fifth century B.C. Herodotus (1.131; 3.8) mentioned the importance of the cult of al-Ilât, i.e. Allat, in ancient Arabia. Her sanctuary at Palmyra (Pl. XVII), excavated in the 1970s by the Polish mission, is in the neighborhood of the temple of Baal Shamin and lends a special character to the city's western quarter, in which Arab tribes settled during the second century B.C.

An early reference to Allat's cult at Palmyra is found in an inscription of September, A.D. 115 (*RSP* 143), which states explicitly that ʿAtai the Elder, a member of the Bene Maazin, brought the idol of the "Lady of the temple" to the Arab quarter (see also below). ʿAtai must have lived in the first part of the first century B.C. In May, A.D. 62, a statue was erected in the Arab quarter to Zabdilah son of Shimeon, a member of the Bene Maazin. The statue was offered to him by the goddess Allat and the Bene Nurbel (*dy ʾqymw lh ʾlt wbny nwrbl lyqrh*; *RSP* 159). Two years later, in February, A.D. 64, the goddess and the Bene Maazin honored Salamallat son of Yarhibola, one of their members, by erecting a statue and a column in his honor. The Greek section, better preserved than the Palmyrene, discloses Salamallat's generosity:

5. εὐσεβῆ καὶ
6. [ἀρέ]σαντα αὐτοῖς ἐν πολλοῖς πράγμασιν
7. [ἕ]ν τε κτίσμασιν καὶ ἀναθήμασιν
8. ἀναλώμασι τε οὐκ ὀλίγοις

(*RSP* 156).

... pious and had been agreeable to them (the Bene Maazin) in numerous affairs, with (his) edifications and votive offerings, and in not a few expenses.

The column honoring Salamallat is in line with the columns of the porticoed street to which the ancient temple of Allat had access. The roofed portico must have made part of the temenos of Allat, hence its sacred character. For worshipers coming from Homs the porticoed street was an easy way to reach the sanctuary. The presence of religious buildings in the western quarter is now documented by the excavations of the Polish archaeologists, but the ancient layout of the area has been known since the 1930s (*Inv.* V, 8; Starcky, *MUSJ* 38 [1962] 131, n. 4).

On the console of a column which forms part of the Transverse Colonnade there is an inscription of March, 129, honoring two Palmyrene brothers who, at their own expense, erected six columns of the portico, their entablature, and part of the ceiling as a votive offering to Shamash, Allat, and Raḥim (*Inv.* V, 8; *CISem.* II, 3955). Around 148 another Palmyrene built the porch of the temple with its six columns. Three broken lines of the text are hardly visible on the lintel of the door, but the last words can be easily deciphered: [. . .*p*]*rnyn wtṣbyth klh mn kys ʾlt*, ". . .the pronaos and all its ornamentation at the expense of Allat" (*RSP* 152; Gawlikowski, *Mélanges Collart*, p. 202).

The temple of Allat must have been the cultic center of the Arab tribes. The goddess was given the title "Lady of the temple" (*mrt bytʾ*; *RSP* 132, 143). But she was not alone in the sanctuary: other gods, Shamash and Raḥim (*rḥm*), for instance, were worshiped with her. The inscription of 115 (*RSP* 143), mentioned above, states that Gaddarṣu son of Yarhai son of Gaddarṣu son of ʿAtai erected an altar to honor the idol (*mṣbʾ*) of the goddess as well as the other gods "who dwell in her vicinity." This theological notion of a convivium of deities may be an element of Phoenician or Aramaic inheritance. Not only the concept of a community of gods but also the manifestation of a deity surrounded by a host of holy beings—*Dominus in splendoribus sanctorum*—are known in the Phoenician pantheons (Milik, *Biblica* 48 [1967] 572-573; *Pagan God*, p. 14).

The sanctuary of these deities must have accomplished the religious—and political—unification of the Arab tribes. It may also have attempted to strengthen the standing of the tribes in the oasis. Recent excavations have revealed the importance of this temple (Drijvers, *Antike Welt* 7 [1976] 28-38).

The tribes of the Bene Maazin and Bene Nurbel shared the cult of Allat at Palmyra. The Bene Nurbel may have provided the priests of her sanctuary (Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 81), for tesserae *RTP* 123 and 165 associate the Bene Nurbel with the cult of the goddess. On these tesserae she is represented as a seated figure with a lion: the camel which appears on both tesserae seems to have been part of the family emblem. The Bene Nurbel were a branch of the great tribe of the Bene Maazin, one of the pivotal tribes of the city (pp. 36-37). Members of these tribes can be counted among the founders of Greco-Roman Palmyra. The Bene Maazin owned the land on which the temple of Baal Shamin was built at least from the beginning of the first century A.D., but by the middle of the second century B.C. the ancestor of the tribe, Yediʿebel the Elder, had already acquired the area to make a funerary property for the family (see pp. 22-24). The descendants of Yediʿebel, the Bene Yediʿebel, worshiped Allat as their patroness, according to the information provided by inscription *BS* 23, an altar of A.D. 62/63 uncovered in the temple of Baal Shamin. The inscription is a votive dedication "to Baal Shamin, Duraḥlun, Raḥim, and the Fortune of Yediʿebel"; very likely Allat's name is concealed under the periphrasis "Fortune of Yediʿebel" (see below).

The cult of Allat is also attested in the Hauran at an early date. A Nabataean inscription of A.D. 56 from Salḥad commemorates the erection of a temple to Allat in the following terms:

1. dnh bytʾ dy bnh rwḥw br mlkw br ʾklbw br rwḥw lʾlt ʾlhthm
2. dy bṣlḥd wdy nṣb rwḥw br qṣyw ʿm rwḥw dnh dy ʿlʾ
3. byrḥ ʾb šnt ʿšr wšbʿ lmnkw mlk nbṭw br ḥrtt mlk nbṭw [r]ḥm ʿmh

This is the temple which Rawaḥu son of Maliku son of Aklabu son of Rawaḥu built to Allat, their goddess, who is in Salḥad, and whose (cult) Rawaḥu son of Qaṣiu, the great-grandfather of the Rawaḥu above (-mentioned), had established (there). In the month Ab, the seventeenth year of Maliku, king of the Nabataeans, son of Haretat, king of the Nabataeans, lover of his people.

The importance of this inscription for the study of the Arab cults in Syria has been stressed by Cooke, *NSI*, p. 253; Cantineau, *Le nabatéen*, II, pp. 16-17; and Milik, *Syria* 35 (1958) 228. All the names mentioned in the inscription are of good Arabic origin, Rawaḥu and Qaṣiu also being names of known Hauranite tribes (Milik, ibid., p. 229, n. 2).

The inscription bears information important on two accounts. First, it indicates that the cult of Allat was established at Salḥad, on one of the southernmost heights of the Jebel Hauran, three generations before the construction undertaken by Rawaḥu in A.D. 56, i.e. at a period which corresponds with the occupation of this region by the Nabataeans after their capture of Damascus around 85 B.C. (Starcky, *Supp. DB*, VII, cols. 905-907). Second, the periphrasis *l'lt 'lhthm dy bṣlḥt,* "to Allat, their goddess, who is in Salḥad," clearly indicates that the goddess had not initially been worshiped in the region; in fact, her cult had been imported from far afield and was to remain the patrimony of the descendants of Qaṣiu: thirty-nine years later one of them, ʿAutallah son of Qaṣiu son of Odainat son of ʿAutallah son of Aklabu son of Rawaḥu son of Qaṣiu, rebuilt the Nabataean temple of the goddess (*CISem.* II, 183-184; Milik, *Syria* 35 [1958] 227-228). Presumably the location of the sanctuary had not changed by the end of the first century A.D.

The history of Allat's cult at Palmyra as the Fortune of the descendants of Yediʿebel is similar to that of her settlement in the Hauran. At Palmyra, however, the cult of the Arab goddess underwent changes that can be easily explained by the composite character of the Palmyrene population. In contrast, the Arabian traits of the Nabataean cults remained practically unaltered for centuries.

Whereas Allat was invoked as "the Fortune of Yediʿebel" in the temple of Baal Shamin, in the temple of Bel she seems to have concealed her personality under other names and epithets. On one of the tesserae used by the Bene Yediʿebel for a religious banquet at the temple of Bel (*RTP* 124) Allat is given the name Astarte (*ʿštrt*). The assimilation of Allat to Astarte is not surprising in a milieu as much exposed to Aramaean and Phoenician influences as the one in which the Palmyrene theologians lived. This assimilation recalls another instance of identification, the statement of Herodotus (3.8) that for the Arabs Allat was Aphrodite Urania. The equation is of great interest, especially in the context in which it was formulated. According the Herodotus, the Arabs worshiped only two gods: Orotal (who is Ruḍa, later identified with Mercury; see *Pagan God*, p. 88) and *al-Ilât*. (Herodotus' spelling represented the middle stage of the contraction of a primitive form *al-ilahât*, "the goddess," the late form being the name *'lt* [*Allat*] attested in proto-Arabic, Nabataean, and Palmyrene inscriptions). It is worth noting that a few centuries later Origen, too, remarked that the Arabs believed in two gods, one male and the other female (*Contra Celsum* 5.37; *Pagan God*, p. 76).

This female deity of Arab origin must be the goddess given on the tesserae the epithet *blty*, "my Lady," and accompanied by a star which is most probably Venus (*RTP* 128, 129, 216-219). The epithet "my Lady" on the lips of a devotee of the goddess rightly befitted the female companion of Bel. Tesserae 128 and 129 bear the legend *'gn bl blty*, "Symposium of *Bel Belti*." Bel's companion could be plainly called Allat, of course, as on tessera *RTP* 123, which belonged to the Bene Nurbel. The inscription on the obverse says: *'gn bl bny nwrbl*. The reverse shows Allat seated, with a frontal head and torso and legs turned to the right to accomodate the profile of her throne. She has a lion at her side and holds a bird in her hand, two borrowings from the iconography of Atargatis. A camel is represented in a walking pose in front of her, a motif which arrived at Palmyra from an oriental source (Colledge, *Art of Palmyra*, pp. 135, 159).

Another epithet of Allat, of Phoenician origin, is *b'ltk*, "your Lady," which must have originated in a liturgical invocation addressed to Bel, as Milik has pointed out (*Dédicaces*, p. 174). A reference in the prayer to the companion of Bel would not have been out of place. *b'ltk* is mentioned together with Bel on two tesserae that belonged to the Bene Taimarṣu, an Arab family. On the first (*RTP* 66) a star and a crescent accompany the inscription *bl b'ltk bny tymrṣw*; on the second (*RTP* 77) only a star is represented together with the text *'gn bl b'ltk bny tymrṣw*.

Allat as assimilated to Astarte is without any doubt the form of the goddess that is better documented at Palmyra. The tessera *RTP* 121 shows on the obverse Bel, Yarhibol, and Aglibol and on the reverse Astarte standing, wearing a long tunic and a polos and holding a scepter. She may be the goddess represented on the ceiling of the great portal of the cella of Bel together with Yarhibol and Aglibol (Colledge, p. 35, pl. 17). Similar motifs can be found in the Palmyrene. A stele from the region of al-Maqateʿ (Pl. VII: 2) depicts five deities: Bel, Baal Shamin, Yarhibol, Aglibol, and Astarte (*Inv.* XII, 54). Another stele found in the Wadi ʿArafa shows nine figures: besides the person offering incense, there are from left to right: Astarte, Aglibol, Malakbel, Bel, Baal Shamin, Nemesis, Arṣu, and Abgal (*Inv.* XII, 55).

In their own subtle way the inscriptions on the statues of Bel and Baal Shamin proclaim that these works represented two different theophanies of the supreme god. But this theological conclusion does not apply to the cult of Astarte and Allat. That the two goddesses are nowhere mentioned together seems to emphasize that they were believed to be the same female deity whom the Arabs called Allat, the Syro-Phoenicians Astarte, the Greeks Aphrodite, etc. This is, of course, the thesis of chapter 11.2 in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*.

A Greek inscription uncovered by an archaeological mission of the Department of Antiquities of Syria and edited by Milik in *Dédicaces*, p. 54, has a bearing on the cult of the goddesses. The text runs as follows:

> Τὸν πάρινον σηκὸν σὺν παντὶ κόσμῳ
> καὶ κανκέλλῳ ἀνέθηκεν ἐξ ἰδίων
> Βαρειχεις Ζαβδιβωλου τοῦ Βαρειχει
> τοῦ Ζαβδιβωλου τοῦ [Μ]αλιχου τοῦ
> Αρζα Γαδσαμα Βωλῳ καὶ Ἴσιδι καὶ
> Ἀφροδείτῃ πατρῴοις θεοῖς ὑπέρ
> σωτηρίας αὐτοῦ καὶ τέκνων καὶ
> ἀδελφῶν, ἔτους ξυ′ μηνὸς Λώου

According to Milik, the chapel with all its decoration and its iron gate was dedicated by Bariki son of Zabdibol son of Bariki son of Zabdibol son of Malku son of *Arza Gadsama* "to Bol, Isis and Aphrodite" in August, 149. In BES 1968, no. 26, however, I proposed the reading Σαμαβωλω, thus interpreting the term as a title of Astarte which would be similar to that of *šm bʿl*, "Name of Baal," borne by Astarte at Ugarit and Tyre. The title would mean that Astarte manifests Baal or makes him known to the faithful. She may be a personification of Baal Shamin because the name in the ancient Near East was thought to work and act. A similar epithet is borne by Tanit, who is styled all over the Punic world as *pn bʿl*, "Face of Baal," and by a male deity of Ascalon whose name on the coins is *Phanebalos*; see BES 1972, no. 62.

The simultaneous cult of Astarte, Isis, and Aphrodite is also attested at Delos in a Greek dedication: Ἴσιδι Σωτείραι Ἀστάρτει Ἀφροδίτηι (*Inscriptions de Délos* 2132). That the cult of Isis at Palmyra should be considered an "ancestral" cult does not necessarily mean that the Egyptian goddess was known in the oasis at an early date. She could have been worshiped in the country of origin of Bariki's family. The genealogy of the inscription traces this family back to the beginning of the Christian era. The family most probably was not of Phoenician extraction: hellenized Syro-Phoenicians would have called Astarte Astarte and not Aphrodite, especially when the juxtaposition Isis-Astarte was so openly accepted; a good example of it can be found in the aretalogy composed by Isidorus for the temple of Isis at Medinet Madi in the Fayyum in the first century B.C. (Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, I, p. 671).

All the names in the family of Bariki are Arab except for that of the ancestor—whether it is read *Arza Gadsama* or *Arzagad*. Milik's interpretation of *Gadsama* as meaning "le dieu Fortune a exaucé" is not convincing. In a second position the element *šmʿ* transcribed in Greek would most probably have been written in the genitive. The reading proposed by Milik, moreover, isolates the divine name *Bol*, but to invoke Bol at Palmyra in the middle of the second century A.D. seems anachronistic. In fact, this would be the sole text recording the survival of such a cult. As for the suggested reading *Samabol* as a divine name, it can plausibly be accepted that southern Palestine was the region in which the name originated and, consequently, the family of Bariki lived. Rulers of this area bearing names such as Šama-Adda or Šamu-Adda are mentioned in the documents of Tell el Amarna; see Knudtzon, *Die El-Amarna Tafeln*, II, p. 1299, and Huffmon, *Amorite Personal Names*, p. 47, under *SM sam-*, *sum-*, **šum-*, "name."

Astarte was the Phoenician counterpart of Ishtar, and the Palmyrenes felt that the two names indeed indicated the same deity, for they styled Astarte *'štr'*, i.e. "the goddess" (*Inv.* XI, 87; Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, p. 52). This reference to the Assyrian Venus is more than the acceptance of a similarity; for it fully reveals Astarte's personality, whose deeds are less familiar, at least today, than those of Ishtar because there is no Phoenician or Palmyrene literature to describe them. In Mesopotamia, Ishtar was a battle-loving goddess who gave victory to the monarchs she loved; Ishtar was their Fortune (Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 197, 205). A Phoenician version of this function of Ishtar can be found in the early inscriptions of Byblos where *Baalat* was the steering force behind the dynasty of the city (*KAI* 4, 7). This political role of Astarte caused her to be an occasional Gad (*gd*) of individuals or towns in the tradition of the Greek *tyche*; for instance, she is the seated goddess represented in the superb relief (Pl. XVIII) found in the temple of Nebo (see p. 97). Of course, the term Gad at Palmyra did not always refer to Astarte/Allat. This particular devotion to the Gad/Fortune that tended to attract the attention of the deity upon a restricted area or special individuals was very likely addressed to familiar deities whose providence could be secured (Starcky, *MUSJ* 38 [1962] 123-139; see also below pp. 94-97).

To the Palmyrenes *Ishtar* was the goddess par excellence, her name being synonymous with *goddess*. In this respect the derivative *'štr'*, whenever it was used at Palmyra, must have conveyed the idea that Astarte/Allat was the powerful goddess of heaven; *'štr'* thus became a more far-reaching concept than the one implied by the common *'lht*. An interesting use of *'štr'* appears in an inscription after the appelative *b'ltk*, which stands in the text for Astarte/Allat (Pl. XIX: 1). The inscription reads as follows:

1. ṣlm' dnh dy lšmš br
2. ḥlypy br 'tpny dy ʿbdw lh
3. bny tymrṣw kmry bʿltk
4. 'štr' lyqrh

(Gawlikowski, *Le temple,* p. 33.)

This statue is of Lishamsh son of Helifi son of Atpeni, which the Bene Taimarṣu, priests of *bʿltk* the goddess, erected for him in his honor.

The association of the Bene Taimarṣu and *bʿltk* is indicated also, as said before, by tesserae *RTP* 66 and 77, but it is the above-cited inscription that explains the true character of that relationship. The Bene Taimarṣu were priests of *bʿltk,* i.e. of that particular liturgical invocation under which the goddess must have been worshiped by some devotees. Presumably this "epiclesis" of Astarte/Allat was important enough to require the organization of a clergy.

It is not surprising to find at Palmyra different names for the same deity. Allat, *blty, bʿltk,* Astarte, *gd* of Yediʿebel, *gd* of Tadmor, all conceal one sole goddess, the female deity of heaven in whose cult Arab Palmyrenes as well as the members of the western tribes were united. This religious phenomenon meets a remarkable analogy in the many liturgical denominations under which the Virgin Mary is worshiped in some Catholic countries, particularly in some Spanish-speaking countries of America. Here, the baroque forms of the Spanish religiosity merged into Indian traditions to produce an exuberant proliferation of cults paid to the Virgin Mary, each one possessing its congregation, its bylaws, its banners, its festivities, and, what is more important, its unique representation of her. If detailed comparison were made of this Catholic iconography with the archaeological and epigraphical remains of Palmyra bearing on the cult of the goddess, the Palmyrenes would show a much more restrained style in their devotion.

At Palmyra and in the Palmyrene region, the representation of Allat as a seated Syrian Atargatis or as a standing Astarte shifted occasionally into a different type of female figure: the standing Athena that had been current in Hellenistic art. By the second century A.D. Allat's traits became those of the armed Athena, "with helmet, *aegis* (or Medusa-head breastplate), spear in the right hand and the left resting on a circular shield at her side. She had this aspect in both urban and rural areas" (Colledge, p. 44; see also ibid., p. 134 and pls. 39, 49; *RTP* 1005; *PNO*, pl. 31:1; Seyrig, *Syria* 21 [1940] 327, fig. 35; Drijvers, *Religion of Palmyra*, pl. XXXVI). Greek inscriptions and reliefs from the Hauran allow for the equating of Athena with Allat (Sourdel, *Cultes du Hauran*, pp. 69-74). The same theological concept holds at Palmyra, as is shown by a Greek inscription found by the Polish mission in 1974 in the temenos of Allat. Here, Allat is named Athena, and she is believed to have sponsored in A.D. 64 the erection of statues to Maliku son of Nashshum son of Shamshigeram and to his son Nashshum (Gawlikowski, *Mélanges Collart*, p. 200). From the same area comes an altar, discovered in 1975, dedicated in 6 B.C. to "Allat who is Artemis" as the Greek inscription states (Drijvers, *Antike Welt* 7 [1976] 36-37). The text most probably intends to identify Allat with the Syrian Atargatis whose statue at Hierapolis represented her as an Athena as well as an Artemis (*De dea syria* 32).

The assimilation of Allat to Athena, however, could hardly have demanded new forms of cult or developed any particular theology. Presumably Athena's cult meant only the acceptance of an iconography that was in vogue and not a true change in the traditional worship of the Arab goddess. The warrior aspect of Allat derived from her being the Arab Venus of the Bedouin, but a satisfactory understanding of these two related aspects of the goddess' personality seems unobtainable today.

Raḥim

The god Raḥim (*rḥm*) formed part of the Arab pantheon at Palmyra. He was worshiped together with Shamash and Allat in the temple erected in the western quarter of the city, as an inscription of March, 129, attests (*Inv. V*, 8; *CISem.* II, 3955). According to this text, a certain Palmyrene (his name is damaged on the stone) and his brother Lishamsh were honored with a statue in the Transverse Colonnade of the city for having paid for "six columns, their entablature, and the ceiling" of the portico of the temple of the three gods (*b’sṭw*[’] *dnh ‘mwdyn št’ wšrythwn wtṭlylhwn mn kyshwn lyqr šmš w’lt wrḥm ’lhy’ ṭby’*).

Raḥim is mentioned with Allat alone on a relief found at Khirbet esh-Shana, in the Palmyrene. The inscription in two lines reads as follows:

1. l'lt wrḥm ʿbd wmwd' rb'l br ʿwyd' br ydʿw
2. wdkyr šlm' br qsyn'

(*Tadmorea* 5; *Syria* 14 [1933] 181.)

To Allat and Raḥim. [This is what] Rabbel son of Awida son of Iadʿu has erected in thanksgiving. And remembered be Shalma son of Cassianus.

Allat is represented seated between two lions, grasping a lance with her right hand and holding a shield with the left (Pl. XX: 2). The goddess wears a helmet. This martial aspect makes her appear to be an Athena in spite of being seated between the two lions (*Syria* 14 [1933] 14, pl. IV; a better reproduction is in *PNO*, pl. 37:1). Unfortunately, the monument does not represent Raḥim. Beside the goddess the artist has carved only the figure of the donor burning incense.

Another relief (Pl. XXXI: 1) of hard limestone, found in the temple of Bel at Palmyra, bears an inscription that mentions Raḥim in the company of two deities: the Gad of the gardens and Arṣu (Starcky, *MUSJ* 38 [1962] 124-132, pl. II). The left side of the monument, where the representation of Raḥim could have been expected, is missing now, a loss which is most regrettable because the image of Raḥim would have cast some light on the personality of the god.

The name Raḥim (*rḥm*) is probably to be related to the attribute *raḥmana*, "the compassionate," often applied to the Palmyrene gods. The Koranic epithets of God, *ar-raḥmān ar-raḥīm*, "the Merciful and the Compassionate," are also good parallels to the Palmyrene name. *rḥm* may be the epithet given to their god by some Arab tribes of the oasis long before they settled there. The attribute, later on, would have been personified and treated as a distinct deity, a phenomenon which is not rare in the Semitic pantheons. The very name *Baal Shamin* was initially an epithet of the supreme god of a given people or region, and so were the names of *Derceto* of Ascalon (BES 1974, no. 60) and *Sakkun* in

Phoenicia (Milik, *Biblica* 48 [1967] 558-559). At Hatra, the titles *mrn*, "our Lord," *mrtn*, "our Lady," and *brmryn*, "the Son of our Lord and our Lady," referred to deities to whom votive inscriptions were addressed in a consistent manner.

The inscriptions show that the devotees of Raḥim were also worshipers of Allat. The Bene Maazin and their associates, the Bene Nurbel, excelled in this devotion (*BS* 23; *RSP* 156, 159; *RTP* 123, 165). The cult of the two deities seems to have been an essential element in the religious life of the Arab tribes of Palmyra.

Shamash and His Astral Companions

A third deity, Shamash, shared with Allat and Raḥim the temple of the Arab quarter, as has already been noted. He was the Sun god of the Arabs.

The devotees of Shamash seem to have belonged to the tribes of the Bene *mgrt* and the Bene Zabdibol, the latter being most probably a subdivision of the former; see *CISem.* II, 3978; Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 306; *RTP* 138, 141. An inscription of March, 129, twice mentioned above (pp. 54 and 62), thanked two brothers of Palmyra, members of the Bene *mgrt*, for their benefactions to the temple of Shamash, Allat, and Raḥim. These were probably the brothers who in A.D. 85 had invoked Shamash as "the god of their forefathers' house" (see below). Some two hundred years later Shamash is styled "theos patroos" in a Greek inscription written perhaps a few months before the fall of Palmyra in 273 (Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, p. 100).

Other families and tribes were equally dedicated to the worship of Shamash. They were Arab, as their names indicate: *š‘dy* or *š‘dw* (from Arabic *š‘d*, "luck"; *RTP* 334, 341), Taimarṣu and Moqimu, members of the family of the Bene *‘ṣr* (*RTP* 339 and p. 164), and Hagegu (*RTP* 336). But non-Arabic names are also found among the worshipers of Shamash, for instance, *blḥzy* (*RTP* 337) and maybe *qšṭ’* (*RTP* 142).

Two groups of tesserae relating to the Sun god can be easily identified at Palmyra (*RTP*, p. 195). One mentions Bel and Shamash, thus associating the Arab deity with the official cult performed at the temple of Bel; these tesserae were used by members of the Bene Zabdibol. In the other group, the tesserae bear only the name of Shamash and the names of individuals or families other than the Bene Zabdibol. It is likely that the two groups represented two different strata in the population of the city, either the first Arab settlers and the successive newcomers or the community of the priests of Shamash and the laymen. The cult of the god was ancient; it must have been established at Palmyra by the middle of the first century B.C., as will appear later.

In the area where the temple of the Arab gods stood, building activity took place continuously until the end of the third century A.D. In March, 179, the Bene Zabdibol erected statues to Yade and Herod sons of Shoraikku (*CISem.* II, 3950, 3953; *Inv.* V, 1 and 4) and to their uncle Alaine son of Hairan (*CISem.* II, 3951; *Inv.* V, 2), all descendants of Ṣeppire. The statues were offered by "the whole tribe" and were set in the porticoed street known today as the Transverse Colonnade. In the same year Shoraikku had been honored with a statue set up by the Senate (*CISem.* II, 3952; *Inv.* V, 3) because he had built "the basilica (*bslq*ʾ *dnh*) with seven pillars and all their decoration, and. . . erected a brazier of bronze" (*knwn*ʾ *dy nḥš*ʾ). The term *bslq*ʾ is likely to be interpreted as the colonnade itself. Shoraikku's accomplishment was matched by his brother's construction of a *claustrum* (*qlsṭr*ʾ; see *CISem.* II, 3951; *Inv.* V, 2).

Although the meanings of the terms *bslq*ʾ and *qlsṭr*ʾ remain uncertain, the erection of these two buildings was without doubt related to the general layout prepared for the temple of the Arab gods. The date when the two brothers offered the buildings to the city is unknown, but the gift was probably made several years before the donors were honored by the Senate and the Bene Zabdibol.

The inscription honoring Shoraikku refers to the erection of a brazier of bronze. Bronze altars with a knobbed shaft and a small cup-like hollow at the top are well known in the Greco-Roman Near East. At Dura-Europos, good examples of these cult objects are shown in the temple of Bel (formerly called the temple of the Palmyrene gods) in the frescoes that represent the family of Conon (Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, pp. 47-48, pls. 32 and 35) and in the relief (Pl. XXXIII) depicting Aphlad (*Rep.*, V, p. 112, pl. 13). The same type of altar appears in the drawing on a pithos from Assur first published by Andrae and Lenzen in *Die Partherstadt Assur*, p. 109, fig. 46, and reproduced by Milik in *Dédicaces*, p. 345. In a later period, this kind of altar is reproduced on the coins of Chosroes II (Ghirshman, *Parthes et Sassanides*, p. 250, fig. 325). But there was another type of small fire altar made of stone on which the sacrifice of incense could be performed (*Rep.*, IX, iii, p. 119, pl. 20, 2; *Inv.* XI, 7; *RSP* 132, 143). It was an imitation of the bronze thymiateria, the use of which was due to an Iranian influence (*Sumer* 21 [1965] 91). Stone altars were offered as ex-votos, and this was done independently of whether incense was burned on them or not. The altar was an offering by itself. In this respect, the term *ʿlt'* seems to be more appropriate, and more widespread, than *knwn'*.[1]

The brazier offered by Shoraikku in the temple of the Arab gods was not necessarily used in connection with the cult of Shamash. What seems to have been characteristic of his cult is the use of *ḥmn'*. Two of the *ḥmn'* at Palmyra were dedicated to Shamash. The first one is mentioned on a block of limestone found by the Polish mission in 1974. The block bears an inscription of three lines, incomplete and in archaic writing. The text runs as follows:

1. [. . .] šnt 282 qrb blḥzy
2. [. . .] brt' ḥmn' dnh lšmš
3. [ʿl ḥywhy wḥy'] bnwhy w'ḥwhy

(Gawlikowski, *Mélanges Collart*, p. 198.)

[. . . in] the year 282 (31 or 30 B.C.) Belḥazai [son of . . .] offered this *ḥmn'* in honor of Shamash [for his life and the lives of] his sons and his brothers.

The second inscription is written on an altar found by R. Wood in 1751 and today housed in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. It reads as follows:

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[1] The Palmyrene term *ʿallatha*, "altar," is not found in the other Northwest Semitic dialects. Of course, *ʿallatha* derives from common Semitic *ʿlh*, "to go up; ascend," and hence, "to bring up; offer," etc. The Syriac *ʿlt'* has preserved both meanings: "offering" and "altar."

1. [b]yrḥ ’lwl šnt 39
2. 6 ḥmn’ dnh w‘lt’ dh
3. [‘]bdw wqrbw lšmš wzbyd’
4. bny mlkw br ydy‘bl br nš’
5. dy mtqr’ br ‘bdbl dy mn
6. pḥd bny mgrt lšmš
7. ’lh byt ’bwhn ‘l
8. ḥyyhwn wḥyy wḥyh[wn]
9. wbnyhwn

(*CISem.* II, 3978.)

[In] the month Elul, the year 396 (September, A.D. 85), this *ḥmn’* and this altar were erected and offered by Lishamsh and Zebida sons of Maliku son of Yedi‘ebel son of Nesha, who was nicknamed Bar-Abdbel, of the tribe of the Bene *mgrt,* to Shamash, god of their forefathers’ house, for their lives and the lives of their brothers and their sons.

This inscription was published, with excellent photographs, by Ingholt in *Mélanges Dussaud,* II, pp. 798-799. See also the remarks made by Milik in *Dédicaces,* pp. 306-307.

The *ḥmn’* was most probably a building and not an altar. Starcky, in *Syria* 26 (1949) 51-55, has drawn attention to the text of Strabo that mentions the existence in Cappadocia of Persian "pyratheia," i.e. enclosures (σηκοί), in the middle of which there was an altar where the magi kept the fire ever burning (15.3.15). Strabo's account is fully confirmed by Pausanias (5.27.5), who describes how "the Persian Lydians" of Hierokaisareia and Hypaipa practiced the cult of fire. This ritual is probably the one represented on a fifth-century B.C. relief from Daskyleion (Nilsson, *GGR*², II, p. 673, pl. 15:2) and the one to which the Aramaic section of the trilingual inscription of Xanthus, in Lycia, refers by using the word *krp’*, **karpa,* instead of the Greek *bômos* (*CRAI* 1974, pp. 82-93, 115-125, 132-149; BES 1975, no. 142; ibid., 1976, no. 171).

Milik and Gawlikowski are, then, correct in noticing that the Hebrew word *ḥammân* of the Old Testament is rendered in the Vulgate by *delubrum* or *fanum.* It is this kind of sanctuary or shrine that is meant by *ḥmn’* in the two inscriptions above quoted as well as in the votive inscription of Maliku son of Bel‘aqab, who dedicated a *ḥmn'* to Sadrafa and Du'anat in A.D. 30 or 31 (*Inv.* X, 145). Two Nabataean inscriptions of southern Syria also mention the erection of a *ḥmn'* (Littmann, *PAES* IVA, nos. 27 and 97; *RES* 2053, 2115).

Archaeological and literary documents reveal that the cult of the sun was very widespread among the Arabs of Syria during the Greco-Roman period. But at Emesa the cult seems to have gained more adepts than anywhere else. The dynastic name of the rulers of the city was *Sampsigeram*, which means "Shamash has decided"; and the Emperor Elagabalus, who had been a priest of the local Sun god at his native Emesa, placed the image of Shamash as the emblem on his coins (Seyrig, *Syria* 48 [1971] 340).

The cult of the Sun god made Hatra famous in North Mesopotamia. Roman writers mention its status as the "city of the god Shamash." Dio Cassius records that Hatra enjoyed a great reputation as a religious center and received a vast number of offerings to the Sun god (76.12.2). The fervor of this cult is confirmed by the series of coins bearing the inscription *ḥṭr' dšmš*, "The fortress of Shamash" (Caquot, *Syria* 29 [1952] 114, and Aggoula, *MUSJ* 47 [1972] 47-48).

Another city where the cult of the Sun god excelled was Edessa. The Arab migrations presumably brought the cult into Edessa, which was the center of the region called Osrhoene by the Greeks. Here, the traditional cult of Sin, the Moon god of Harran, had prevailed ever since the beginning of the first millennium B.C. (see above, p. 43-46). In the early centuries of our era some Syriac inscriptions originating at Sumatar Harabesi still invoked Sin as "Lord of the gods" (*Pagan God*, p. 150). In 362, however, the increasing influence of the solar theology had already engulfed the Edessenes, for when the Emperor Julian delivered his oration on Helios at Antioch (*Orationes* 4.150CD) he remarked that the Edessenes worshiped the Sun flanked by Azizos and Monimos, two deities to be identified with Ares and Hermes, according to Iamblichus. Thus Monimos is the planet Mercury, whereas Azizos is Venus.

The name Azizos, which derives from the root *'zz* and means "the strong one," was most probably a male personification of Venus, which as a morning star seems to have acquired a warrior character among the Bedouin. This martial character of Venus must account for the identification of Azizos with Ares (Mars). But neither the Edessenes nor Iamblichus could possibly have thought of Mars as an acolyte of the Sun because the planet does not accompany the sun. The name Monimos, on the other hand, stands for Mercury, the planet that precedes the sunrise. Monimos, from Arabic *mun‘îm*, "the favorable one," is another name for Ruḍa or Ruldaiu according to the spelling found in the Assyrian Annals of Sennacherib. The cultural traditions hidden behind the two names reported by Julian have been precisely and intelligently summarized by Starcky in *Semitica* 22 (1972) 62-63.

The Edessean theology may have developed as a result of the vogue that the cult of Helios gained in the Levant. The important information afforded by Julian's Oration 4, however, is that the theologians of the city corroborated what Herodotus (3.8) first and Origen (*Contra Celsum* 5.37) much later on had said about the Arab pantheon: that the Arab deities were basically two, a male one who could occasionally be identified with Dionysus and a female one who was the deity of heaven, her identification with Aphrodite Urania, Astarte, or Ishtar thus becoming altogether coherent. Hence the astral character of the religion of Edessa embodied late theological reflections on the ancient Arab cults of the desert by which the deified planets Mercury and Venus were believed to be identical with the ancestral pair of male and female deities (*Pagan God*, p. 88, n. 61).

At Palmyra, Azizos was worshiped together with Arṣu, i.e. the god Ruḍa or Ruldaiu. In an inscription of 213 a relief is dedicated to the two deities. They are represented as gods of the steppes, Arṣu riding a camel and Azizos a horse (Pl. XXI: 1). The text reads as follows:

1. lʾrṣw wlʿzyzw ʾlhyʾ ṭbyʾ wskryʾ ʿbd bʿly
2. br yrḥbwlʾ ʾpklʾ dy ʿzyzw ʾlhʾ ṭbʾ
3. wrḥmnʾ ʿl ḥywhy wḥyʾ ʾḥwhy byrḥ tšry
4. šnt 25 dkyr yrḥy glwpʾ

(*CISem.* II, 3974.)

To Arṣu and Azizu, the good and bountiful gods. (This is what) Baalai son of Yarhibola, priest of Azizu, the good and compassionate god, erected for his life and the lives of his brothers. In the month Tishri, the year (5)25 (October, 213). Remembered be Yarhai, the sculptor.

For the date of the monument, see Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 22, who follows Ingholt's remarks in *Studier over Palmyrensk Skulptur*, pp. 42-47.

A stele of the middle of the second century A.D. found by the Polish mission at Palmyra represents Azizos riding a horse. In front of him the donor is shown burning incense. The text runs as follows:

1. ʿbd	Monʿîm made
2. mnʿym	(it) for Aziz,
3. lʿzyz ṭbʾ	the good (god).

(*RSP* 151.)

A fragment of a stele in soft limestone from Khirbet Semrin has also preserved the name of Azizos (*PNO*, pp. 58 and 146, no. 10, pl. 23:4).

To judge from the title "priest of Azizu" held by Baalai son of Yarhibola, the cult of Azizos must have been established at Palmyra on a permanent, if not on an official, basis. In fact, several tesserae portray a priest holding two standards which are very likely those of Arṣu and Azizos (*RTP* 177, 178, 180). A series of tesserae either mention Arṣu or represent him riding a camel; sometimes his camel appears alone accompanied by a star, the standards, or the crescent (*RTP*, p. 192). Clearly, the information now available tells very little about Azizos. The characteristics of his cult can be ascertained only by studying cultic relics that belong to the liturgy of Arṣu, Azizos' partner. Azizos is depicted as a horseman, whereas Arṣu is a cameleer. The camel is Arṣu's animal, which is easy to understand because the god had an active and warlike role among the Arab tribes. For the inhabitants of the desert the camel is a means of transport as much as the soldier's vehicle.

Arsu is an ancient Arab name. The Assyrians called him Ruldaiu and Herodotus Orotal (Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 49). The Greeks saw him as an Ares, the god of war, as shown by a bilingual inscription from the temple of Baal Shamin (*BS* 45), but this identification may be based on the phonetic analogy of the names *Arṣu*/*Ares* (Starcky, *Semitica* 22 [1972] 62). The epithet of Arṣu on tesserae *RTP* 175 and 176 is *rʿyy*ʾ or *rʿy*ʾ, i.e. the one who loves. This Aramaic epithet would then be the translation of his Arabic name *rḍw* or *ʾrṣw* (*RTP*, p. 183). As said above, another name of the god is Monimos, i.e. *munʿim*, "the favorable one," (Pl. XXV: 1) which seems to correlate with the epithet borne by Arṣu on the tesserae.

A tradition similar to that of Edessa is found in the Hauran. An altar in the Museum of Sueida represents the eagle, symbol of the sun, standing with its wings fully spread on a bust of Azizos, identified by the accompanying Greek inscription (Dunand, *Musée de Soueïda*, p. 18, no. 8, pl. 9). The motif readily conveys the idea that Azizos, as a personification of the planet Venus, carries the sun. A similar motif, the representation of an eagle displaying its wings above two youths, appears in a relief of the temple of Mesʿad (Dunand, pp. 33-34, no. 38bis, pl. 14). In the Hauran, Azizos and Monimos clearly stood for Phosphorus, the Morning Star, and Hesperus (Sourdel, *Cultes du Hauran*, pp. 75-76); but in this identification the original cult of the two companions of the Sun seems to have yielded to a symbolism lacking theological connotations.

Atargatis

Archaeological evidence for a cult of Atargatis in the Palmyrene oasis is meager. A text of 132 (*BS* 45) mentions the temple of Atargatis (*ʿtrʿth*) at Palmyra (see p. 37, line 13). The tessera *RTP* 201 shows the goddess accompanied by a bull's head and a star. The bilingual inscription of 140 is mentioned below. Other references come from Dura-Europos. This scanty information contrasts with the fervor her devotion aroused elsewhere in the ancient Near East.

The cult of Atargatis, not very popular at Palmyra, must have reached the city from North Syria and must have been preserved as a relic by the Bene Mitha, an Aramaean group, for they had worshiped the goddess under her Aramaean name, ʿAttar-ʿatteh. In a bilingual inscription of 140 (see pp. 89-90) the goddess is styled "ancestral."

The Aramaean name of the goddess is composite: *ʿattar-ʿatteh.* The first element is a cognate form of *ʿṯtr*(*t*) at Ugarit and of *ʿštr* at Moab (*KAI* 181:17). It is to be related to the name of the goddess *Atar* (*Samain*) of North Arabia mentioned in the Assyrian Annals (Weippert, *Die Welt des Orients* 7 [1972] 44-45). At Ugarit the Akkadian documents equate *ʿAṯtart* to the Mesopotamian Ištar (*Ugaritica,* V, pp. 45, 56-57). The element *ʿAttar* appears in personal names of the early Aramaean period (Fitzmyer, *Sefîre,* p. 26). This epigraphical information clearly indicates that the Aramaean *ʿAttar* was an astral goddess, very likely the personification of Venus, with a role in the Syrian pantheon similar to that of Astarte in Phoenicia. The second element of Atargatis, *ʿatteh,* also attested in personal names, is the name *ʿAnat;* the goddess *ʿAnat* is well known in the Ugaritic pantheon. Less familiar is her relation to the Syrian Atargatis.

The origin and the meaning of ʿAnat remain as yet uncertain. Caquot and Sznycer propose to explain *ʿnt* as the plural form of *ʿn,* "spring" (*Textes ougaritiques,* p. 87), but other scholars, following W. F. Albright (*Archaeology and the Religion of Israel,* p. 192, n. 14), suggest that ʿAnat's original meaning was "sign, indication of purpose, active will" and that therefore ʿAnat would be the personified will of Baal (Dahood, *Le antiche divinità semitiche,* p. 81). Milik stresses the meaning of the Hebrew *ʿet,* the Aramaic *ʿenet,* and concludes that ʿAnat means the *Nunc* of the religious experience (*Biblica* 48 [1967] 567). The conjecture made by Albright is worth some attention, for a passage in Diodorus of Sicily (2.4.2) refers to the temple of the goddess of Ascalon as τέμενος θεᾶς ἐπιφανοῦς. This goddess is likely to be identified with ʿAnat because her name at Ascalon was *Derceto* according to Diodorus, and one of ʿAnat's titles as queen of heaven at Ugarit was *baʿlatu darkati,* "Mistress of the Dominion" (BES 1972, no. 62; ibid. 1974, no. 60). The translation of *epiphanês* is uncertain: "appearing" or, rather, "famous"? If *ʿAnat* indeed means the tangible personification of Baal's will, it is then possible to correlate her name and the epithet *epiphanês* with the title *pane baal*, "Face, or Presence, of Baal," borne by Tanit, the goddess who supplanted ʿAnat in late antiquity (Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan*, pp. 130, 134-135).

Astarte and Tanit are associated in a late Phoenician inscription from Sarepta (*Pagan God*, p. 118, n. 54) and another at Carthage (*KAI* 81). Subsequently, one deity must have taken preeminence over the other because Tanit was mentioned in the Punic world almost exclusively, whereas Astarte's cult throve in the ancient Near East. Traces of Astarte's preeminent status are detected in a myth which Diodorus of Sicily heard at Ascalon (2.4.3). According to this tradition, Aphrodite (Astarte), incensed by Derceto's behavior, conceived a mischievous plan that led her rival to suicide. Derceto drowned herself in a lake and became a fish. Thus the myth placed Derceto in the religious milieu of Atargatis, to whom fish pools like those of Hierapolis or Edessa were dedicated (Segal, *Edessa*, p. 54).

The identification of the Derceto of Ascalon with the Syrian Atargatis was made by Strabo, and not by Ctesias, in his *Geography* (16.4.27) and later on by Athenaeus (in *The Banquet* [8] 346e), who paraphrased Xanthus of Lydia. But Atargatis also took the place of an earlier Astarte at the shrine of ʿAshtaroth-Qarnaim, in Palestine, during the Hellenistic period; see 2 Maccabees 12:26; Avi-Yonah, *Gazetteer*, p. 32. Probably this is the time when Atargatis became the partner of Hadad, the supreme god of the Aramaean pantheon (*Pagan God*, pp. 53-55).

Atargatis and her consort are represented in a relief from Dura-Europos (Pl. XX: 1) that was found in the debris of her temple there, built during the Parthian period (Perkins, pp. 16-20; *Rep.*, III, pp. 9-21). The two figures are seated side by side, but Atargatis, flanked by her lions, is larger than Hadad. Hadad's attribute, the bull, is represented at the outside edge at a considerably smaller scale than are the lions (see Perkins, pp. 94-96). As was the case at Hierapolis, and many centuries earlier at Byblos, the supremacy of the weather god was overshadowed by the popularity of the female partner (*Pagan God*, pp. 47-48, 55) and consequently the artist portrayed Atargatis at Dura-Europos larger than Hadad.

The object represented on the relief between the heads of the two gods has excited the curiosity of scholars. It is a cultic standard and not the image of a third god. The most sensible, and lasting, remarks on the subject were made by Seyrig in "Les dieux de Hiérapolis," *Syria* 37 (1960) 233-251. The standard consists of a pole which bears three disks and is topped by a crescent. Similar standards have been found at Hatra (Downey, *Sumer* 26 [1970] 195-225) (Pl. XIX: 2).

Men who seem to have been members of the thiasos of Atargatis wrote their names in Greek on a slab of gypsum, today weathered and worn, dated September 20, A.D. 37. The text commemorates the construction of a holy place at Dura-Europos in honor of Atargatis:

1. Ἔτο<υ>ς ημτ′ μηνὸς Γορ-
2. πιαίου Κ′ Ἀγαθῆι Τύχηι
3. Συναχθέντες οἱ ὑπογεγρ-
4. αμμένοι συνέταιροι ᾠκοδό-
5. μησαν τὸν συνχωρηθέ<ν>τα τό-
6. πον τῆι θεᾶι ὑπὸ Ζεβίδιος καὶ Ραχ-
7. ιμναίο[υ] . . . etc.

(*YCS* 14[1955] 129-131; Milik, *Dédicaces*, pp. 135-136.)

The *topos* was "conceded" by two persons, Zebidis and Rachimnaeus, probably two brothers who owned it, and was "built" by other members of the brotherhood, the fifteen whose names are listed in lines 8-15. *Topos* denotes the place where the association met. This use of the word is compatible with the one for "temple"; for instance, in 2 Maccabees 1:15 *topos* indicates the temple of Nanai; see Roberts, Skeat, and Nock, *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 29 (1936) 45-46; *IGLS* 2801-2802.

Dura-Europos provides abundant information regarding the religious associations, as Milik has noted (*Dédicaces*, pp. 122-140). In the temple of Bel (Pls. XXII, XXIII) (formerly called the Temple of the Palmyrene Gods) at Dura-Europos rooms E and K have preserved the names of the members of the thiasos written in Greek. Room K has a scene of sacrifice over an aedicula (Pl. XXIV).

Two men accompanied by two acolytes offer an incense sacrifice to five deities standing in a row at the left of the scene. The figure in the center probably represents Bel flanked by Yarhibol and Aglibol (with the crescent below the nimbus). At the far right there is an unidentified deity. At the far left there is a female deity, Allat, who wears a long robe and holds a shield (Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, pp. 123-132; Perkins, pp. 45-46). One of the sacrificants is Otes, a eunuch who claims to have built the *exedra*, namely, the entire room K (Cumont, *Fouilles*, pp. 364-365) where the sacred repasts were celebrated. The companion of Otes is probably his master, Yahbshimshos son of *ʿAbdʿathe*, a senator of the city. The inscriptions in the temple show that servants and slaves of the Roman families settled at Dura-Europos were particularly devoted to the Palmyrene gods.

Personal names with the element *ʿt(h)* are very frequent at Palmyra, and they mean that ʿAthe "has given" (*ntn*), "has protected" (*ʿqb*), is "the light" (*nwr*), "the stronghold" (*šwr*), or "the hope" (*škʿt*) of the infant.[2] A theophorous name worth noticing here is *ʿAttʿemm*, "ʿAthe is [my] mother." All these names are related to the cult of Atargatis, whose name at Hierapolis was written *ʿtrʿth*, *trʿth*, and on the coins of the city also *ʿth* (Seyrig, *Rev. num.* 13 [1971] 13).

One of the coins from Hierapolis (ibid., no. 5) is of particular interest because it shows the head of the goddess with her hair dressed in a fashion which is strikingly similar to that of the goddess depicted on an ivory plaque from Ugarit (Seyrig, ibid., p. 14; *Ugaritica*, I, pp. 292-293, pl. 56; *ANEP*, fig. 464). The parallel between the two monuments is appropriate. The Ugaritic goddess may be either Athirat, El's consort, or *ʿAthtart* (Gese, *Die Religionen Altsyriens*, pp. 154-155); the personality of the goddess, however, remains unknown. Atargatis inherited some of the features of Athirat, who at Ugarit was *qnyt ʾilm*, "She who gives birth to the gods" (Caquot and Sznycer, p. 69), but the goddess of Hierapolis also embodied in her cult some of the Phrygian traditions that held Kubaba (Kybele in Greek) to be the Great Mother of Nature. In this connection it should be remembered that one of the many myths concerning the foundation of the temple at Hierapolis claimed, according to Lucian in *De dea syria* 15, that Atargatis was *Rhea* (Kybele) and that the sanctuary had been erected by Attis, the youthful consort of the goddess. To be sure, the presence of Anatolian elements in the cult of Atargatis at Hierapolis should explain in a satisfactory manner the devotion to her as a goddess of more than one countenance: Atargatis at Hierapolis was not only Aphrodite or Athena but Selene, Rhea, Artemis, Nemesis, and the Parcae (*De dea syria* 32; see *Pagan God*, pp. 35-37). These traditions coalesced with those of Canaanite extraction that preserved the cult of Athirat, mother of gods. At times a careful distinction should be made between Atargatis and Astarte because the goddess of Hierapolis did not fully personify Venus as Astarte/Allat did for Phoenicians, Aramaeans, and Arabs.

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[2] On the Palmyrene personal names, see A. Caquot, "Sur l'onomastique religieuse de Palmyre," *Syria* 39 (1962) 231-256; for the Semitic theophorous names in general, see *Pagan God*, pp. 156-160.

A major representation of Atargatis at Palmyra can be seen on a colossal limestone beam of the temple of Bel. One of its faces shows Bel in his chariot charging a monster. The scene is witnessed by six deities, one of whom is Atargatis, identified by the fish at her feet (*Pagan God*, p. 136; Colledge, pp. 35-36). This artistic tradition can be linked to that of Ascalon, where Atargatis was portrayed as a mermaid (*De dea syria* 14), or to that of Khirbet Tannur, the Nabataean sanctuary of Edom, where the goddess was usually represented accompanied by fish (Starcky, *Rev. bibl.* 75 [1968] 226-230).

CHAPTER FOUR

TUTELARY DEITIES

Ginnayê

The Arab gods of Palmyra are frequently styled *gny*', *ginnaya*, plu. *ginnayê*, namely, genii or tutelary deities. This Aramaic term is to be related to Arabic *jinn* (Starcky, *Syria* 26 [1949] 64-70), even though *jinn* in modern times has come to mean the demons whose deeds are often not propitious to human beings, to such an extent indeed that at times exorcism may be required in order to free individuals from their malefic power.

The Palmyrene *ginnaya* is like the Latin *genius*. The Classical writers acknowledged the existence of deities who were tutelaries of persons and places. Virgil, for instance, refers to the "genius loci" in the *Aeneid* 1.95. In petitions and oaths Romans often appealed to the "genii" of the persons addressed.

As is the case with the *jinn* for modern Bedouin, the Palmyrene *ginnayê* were believed to be like human beings in presence and behavior. Consequently, the various ways in which they were represented by Palmyrene artists mirror the specific roles that the deities played in Palmyrene society. The concern of these genii was to take care of human lives and enterprises. The Palmyrenes worshiped them everywhere and gave them the epithet *šbb*', "close," meaning that the deities were guardians of people (Starcky, *Mélanges Collart*, pp. 333-334). This function assimilated them to the Christian angels. Origen, the great theologian of the school of Alexandria, described the angels as "standing over those worthy to be guarded" (*Contra Celsum* 8.27).

The Palmyrene genii were frequently invoked in pairs, and the reliefs usually portray each one in a characteristic guise. Some scholars believe that certain pairs of gods stand for the Dioscuri (*PNO*, pp. 126-127; Starcky, *Mélanges Collart*, pp. 332-333). But there is very little evidence for a cult of Castor and Pollux at Palmyra or in the Palmyrene region. On the other hand, these pairs of genii differ from the groupings of two or three gods that are found in cultic inscriptions written in Phoenician or in Aramaic; at Palmyra itself the liturgical formulae that invoked Bel, Yarhibol, and Aglibol or Malakbel and Aglibol stemmed from a theological conception different from the one that called upon any two Arab genii.

The Palmyrenes acknowledged the genii as protectors of their caravans, their cattle, and their desert villages. The Arabs at Palmyra, but especially those of the Palmyrene, were most likely Bedouin, nomads and villagers alike, who combined two ways of life, much as the Bene Tamim of the Jebel Shammar province, in Saudi Arabia, did until the nineteenth century (Doughty, *Arabia Deserta*, reprint ed., 1969, II, pp. 269-270). In the slow process by which tribesmen passed from a nomadic type of life to a sedentary one the tutelary genii were always present. They protected the Bedouin in their wanderings to drive cattle from one pasture to another, an occupation which is still part of the desert landscape. Edomite Bedouin by the middle of the second millennium B.C. used to move periodically into the better pastures of the Nile Delta, and this was the case in the last century when the tribes from an-Nafud, between Teima and Hail, used to go up to Palmyra and Qariatein during the droughty years (Doughty, I, p. 619). Tutelary gods were called upon to protect these flocks against all possible depredatory incursions.

No less necessary was the protection of the genii for the trading caravans. Camels loaded with all kinds of products were easy prey to wandering robbers. The caravans had to be escorted through the desert and this, the Palmyrenes believed, was the main occupation of the genii (*Inv.* X, 44). On two occasions artists represented one of the tutelary gods riding a horse, probably as the leader of the caravan, while the other is mounted on a camel (*CISem.* II, 3974; Starcky, *Palmyre*, pl. X, 3). Only a century ago in the official pilgrimage of the Muslims to Mecca, the pasha, with whom lay all the charge of conducting the caravan, rode a horse, whereas common pilgrims used camels or traveled in litters. The horse gave its rider great mobility during the march (Doughty, I, p. 109).

The tutelary gods are consistently portrayed wearing what must have been the typical dress of the region (Pl. XXV: 2): a tunic with long sleeves, a cloak thrown over the back in a way that recalls the Roman *palludamentum,* and a loincloth that was knotted at the waist. This last piece of clothing can be compared to the *ihram* which is worn by pilgrims when they start descending to Mecca and which is kept until the last ritual in the Wadi Muna is completed (Doughty, II, p. 574; Burton, *Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah,* reprint ed., 1964, II, p. 139). A distinctive feature of the garb of the gods is the carrying of weapons: a sword, a spear, and a round shield. If the deities are represented riding, the bow and the quiver form part of the animal harness. The gods were believed to ride with bare legs, like their worshipers. But the legs always appeared covered in the static figures created by the artists. The trousers worn by the Arab gods in some reliefs document a Persian fashion, which was very much in favor at Palmyra in spite of the Roman presence in the city. Bedouin in ancient times must have always carried arms: swords, short spears, daggers, or lances. This practice has persisted until recent times. In the nineteenth century firearms were not greatly esteemed among the North Arabian tribesmen (Doughty, I, p. 504). And in ancient times as well as today a good substitute for arms was a staff or the camel stick, which the Bedouin held (and still hold) as a scepter.

Reliefs depicting the genii have been found primarily in the wadis and outskirts of Palmyra or in the hamlets that surrounded the oasis in Roman times. Here the Arab tribesmen lived as seminomads, which was not the case with the Arabs living in the city itself. To be sure, it is not easy to delimit the sociological borders that among those seminomads separated the desert villagers, who raised cattle and did some tilling of the soil, from the tribesmen who were camel breeders and wandered deep into the vast desert. The Arab scholar ibn-Khaldoun, writing in 1337, was at pains to describe the differences between Bedouin and sedentary people in the desert: there are "those who live by agriculture or animal husbandry" and those who live in towns. The former "cannot avoid the call of the desert, because it alone offers the wide fields, pasture for animals, and other things that the settled areas do not offer"; their social structure does not take them "beyond the bare subsistence level.” The latter create a different environment for themselves: they improve their living conditions to the point of acquiring “more wealth and comfort than they need,” which leads them to have “the most developed luxury customs” (trans. Rosenthal, p. 91).

Ibn-Khaldoun admits, however, that those who make their living through agriculture are forced to be more stationary than those who raise sheep and cattle; shepherds must “travel around in order to find pasture and water for their animals.” But camel breeders “move around” even more because they feed their animals on the desert shrubs (ibid., p. 92).

The desert has always known an incessant traffic of persons and animals. In Roman times the hamlets around Palmyra were not only centers of settled life but also relays for the passing caravans. In this environment the cult of tutelary gods proliferated. They were believed to protect flocks and caravans and therefore shrines were erected in their honor. These sanctuaries are today the sole relics of that complex populace of transients and settlers.

Abgal

The god Abgal, standing alone or with other deities, is often represented as a youth with long hair and moustache, wearing the local costume and grasping a lance (*PNO*, pls. 23: 4, 27: 4; *Inv.* XII, 55). In reliefs from Khirbet Semrin that portray the god riding a horse, the bow and the quiver are shown attached to the saddle (*PNO*, pp. 55-58). The inscription on one of the monuments indicates that Yarhibol had placed Abgal in charge of the inhabitants of the village. The text runs as follows:

1. dkyr
2. ’bgl
3. w’ḥwhy
4. wbny byth
5. qdm yrḥbwl
6. dy yhb l’bgl
7. šlṭn’ b’tr’
8. klh lʿlm

9. wdkyr kl gbr dy
10. ydḥl l'bg
11. l bṭb 'dry...

(*PNO* 2 ter.)

Let Abgal, his brothers, and the members of his house be remembered by Yarhibol who gave [the god] Abgal authority over [this] locality for ever. Let whoever fears [the god] Abgal be remembered ....

The text has been interpreted after Gawlikowski's remarks in *Le temple*, pp. 114-115. The role of Yarhibol in the civic life of Palmyra is known from inscriptions (*Pagan God*, p. 112 and n. 39).

Abgal had a sanctuary at Khirbet Semrin (Pl. XXVII: 1) built in the Greco-Roman style (*PNO*, pp. 94-96, nos. 7 and 8). D. Schlumberger, the excavator of the site, found an inscription in the cella dated in 195. It stated that ʿOga son of Honaina son of ʿOgeilu erected the sanctuary (*hykl'*), its ceiling, its gates, and their decoration (*wtrʿwh wtṣbyth klh*) in honor of Abgal and Maan (*l'bgl wlmʿn*), "the good and bountiful gods." At both sides of the entrance there are banquet rooms (Pl. XXVII: 2) with a triclinium extending along three of the four walls; the couch support of the triclinium was made of plaster (*PNO*, p. 21). Three more banquet rooms appear to the north some 25 m from the sanctuary entrance. The banquet rooms and the sanctuary with its dependencies formed a close compound built in honor of these two Arab genii. The sequence of dates in the inscriptions from October, 154, when a stele (Pl. XXVI: 2) representing Abgal and Ashar was erected by Maqqai son of Azizu, until March, 270, when an altar was dedicated to "the helpful genii" (*lgny' šʿyd'*), seems to indicate that the sanctuary area changed steadily and that new cultic buildings were added to the initial shrine (*PNO*, nos. 6, 9, 8, 3, 13, 16, 15, 20, 14; in this order). This would certainly account for the irregular structure of the compound as a whole.

The cult of Abgal appeared late in the Palmyrene: the dated inscriptions belong to the second and third centuries. It was prominent in the Palmyrene, but it must have been practically nonexistent at Palmyra. None of the innumerable tesserae used in the city for the religious banquets mentions Abgal. Abgal was a god of the steppes brought to the Palmyrene by the nomads of the steppes. In the inscriptions he is invoked as "god," "good god," "good and bountiful god," "good protector," "good and bountiful protector." In 153 he was worshiped with Bel, Baal Shamin, Aglibol, Malakbel, Astarte, Nemesis, and Arṣu on a stele offered by Shewira and Male to the gods for their welfare and that of their children; the monument comes from the Jebel al-Abiad (*Inv.* XII, 55). Some sixty years later an altar found near the entrance of the sanctuary of Abgal at Khirbet Semrin was dedicated by a certain Nebuzabad to Aglibol, Malakbel, and Abgal, "the genii" (*PNO*, pp. 59 and 149, no. 16). Aglibol and Malakbel were gods of Syrian origin worshiped primarily at Palmyra; their association with Abgal is rather exceptional. Abgal is usually in the company of gods whose cults flourished in the desert and among Arab nomads, as the personal names indicate. He is associated with Azizos, Maan, Ashar, or Shalman, gods of the steppes like himself (*PNO*, nos. 10, 7a, 6b, 38; in this order).

Maan and Saad

Maan was worshiped with Abgal in the temple at Khirbet Semrin dedicated in 195 (Pls. XXVII: 1). At Ras esh-Shaar, also in the Palmyrene, Maan is styled "good and bountiful god" in an altar inscription addressed to him by the brothers Elahbel, Rabbel, and Mahru. The monument is dated in August, 194 (*PNO*, pp. 23-24 and 94, fig. 45:1, no. 37). Here Maan's name is spelled *m‘nw*. He is often invoked together with *š‘d(w)*, another Arab god. At Ras esh-Shaar, for instance, a stele (Pl. XXVI: 1) represents Maan holding a lance and riding a horse, whereas Saad rides a camel (*PNO*, p. 66, no. 35, pl. 27:3). Between the two figures the artist has portrayed the devotee offering incense; his name, Shimeon son of Maan son of Wartan, reveals a complex ethnic group, identified by a Jewish, an Arab, and a Persian name, respectively (*RTP*, p. 178; *PNO*, p. 155).

Maan is associated with Saad on two tesserae of Palmyra which show the camel, not the horse, as the animal of these genii (*RTP* 248, 249). Inscriptions and monuments present Maan as an Arab god. His name, albeit of dubious interpretation, is Arabic; it became a personal name frequently used by the Nabataeans; in North Syria it was borne by members of the royal family of Edessa (Stark, *PNPI*, p. 96). Maan's feast at Palmyra was celebrated on the sixteenth of August. On that occasion meals of beef were prepared for the commensals during the holiday period (Seyrig, *Syria* 18 [1937] 372, 377; Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 157). The tessera *RTP* 252 is of some interest; the obverse bears the following text: *mʿnw t[w]rʾ bny šmʿwn bkl ʿd šlm*, "Maanu—beef. The Bene Shimeon. During the whole feast. Peace!" The martial character of the tutelary god is underscored by a tessera (*RTP* 251) that shows the elements of Maan's iconography: sword, lance, and shield instead of his image.

Ashar(u)

Another companion of Abgal is Ashar. He is represented as a horseman, in Arab garb, holding a lance and a shield. He is "the good genius," *gnyʾ ṭbʾ* (*Inv.* XI, 66; *PNO*, no. 6c). At Dura-Europos Ashar is worshiped with Saad on a stele that shows him as a horseman and Saad as a standing figure. Both are portrayed in the same manner: identical Parthian coiffure, huge puffs of hair at each side of the face, bushy moustaches and, of course, the same local garment (Perkins, *Art of Dura-Europos*, pp. 96-97). (Frontispiece). The interpretation of the last word of the inscription remains as yet uncertain (*Inv. D-E* 20, 21; Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 342).

Theophorous names of Ashar are frequent in the Northwest Semitic area, especially where the Arab population was dominant. Thus, at Hatra, the inscriptions reveal names such as *ʿwydʾšr*, "Refuge of Ashar" (Caquot, *Syria* 41 [1964] 272, no. 204; Degen, *Die Welt des Orients* 5 [1970] 230, no. 227; Stark, *PNPI*, pp. 104-105); *ʿbdʾšr*, "Servant of Ashar" (Caquot, op. cit., p. 266, no. 181); *ntwnʾšr*, "Ashar has given" (Caquot, op. cit., p. 254, nos. 113, 114). In these personal names the element *ʾšr* is to be rendered by "Ashar" and not by "Assur," the name of the Assyrian god (Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 338). The name *ʿbdʾšr*, "Servant of Ashar," may also have existed in the Hauran (Milik, ibid., p. 341). The god was certainly known, and he had a chapel (*ḥmnʾ*) erected in his honor at Deir el-Meshquq in 124, as the following inscription attests:

1. dnh ḥmn' dy ʿbd mʿyrw br ʿqrb
2. bt 'šrw 'lh' 'lh mʿynw šnt šbʿ lhdryns qysr

(Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 341.)

This is the shrine which Muairu son of ʿAqrab erected in the sacred precinct (*bt*) of Ashar the god, god of [the Bene] Muainu, in the seventh year of Caesar Hadrian.

šlmn and *šlmt*

Abgal is invoked with the god *šlmn* on an altar from Ras esh-Shaar (*PNO*, no. 38). *šlmn* also receives the epithets "good and bountiful" (Starcky, *Semitica* 3 [1950] 47) on a stele found some 20 km to the north of Palmyra. His cult was popular in Syria; at the Jebel Sheikh Barakat, near Aleppo, *šlmn* and *Madbakhos* received the title ancestral gods (*patrooi theoi*) in a Greek inscription which has been known since the last century (*IGLS* 465-474; Milik, *Biblica* 48 [1967] 578). Here, the name of the god is spelled *Selamanes*. *šlmn* seems also to have been the name of a Phoenician god according to a Phoenician inscription from Sidon today housed in the Louvre Museum (Cooke, *NSI*, p. 42, no. 7), but there are no theophorous names of the god in the Phoenician onomastics so far. The name *Solômanes* in a Greek inscription from Tartus, in the Arados region (*IGLS* 4027), apparently reveals the Phoenician pronunciation of *šlmn*. At Palmyra, the divine name became a personal name (*RTP*, p. 189), and this was the case at Dura-Europos also; see Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, p. 439, who gives references to other Syrian names. At Emesa a certain *Salmanes* is the son of an Arab, Azizu (*IGLS* 2251). The theophorous name *'mtšlmn* is borne at Palmyra by a woman who had been a slave (Ingholt, *Berytus* 2 [1935] 91, 93).

The divine name *šlmt* derives from the root *šlm* and, as is the case with *šlmn*, has an uncertain meaning. For Starcky the Palmyrene deities *šlmn* and *šlmt* are identical with the Assyrian Šulman and Šulmanitu (*PNO*, p. 156, no. 38). This reference to the Mesopotamian pantheon, however, does not explain the personalities of the Palmyrene deities because those of their Assyrian counterparts are equally obscure, as the article of W. F. Albright in *AfO* 7 (1931-

1932) 164-169 and his remarks in *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan*, pp. 148-150, have shown. The cult of the two Palmyrene deities most probably goes back to an Arab milieu (Höfner and Merkel, "Nord- und Zentralarabien," *Götter und Mythen im Vorderen Orient*, pp. 466-467), and it is this cultural context that explains their presence in the Palmyrene together with other Arab genii.

The name *šlmt* appears on the pedestal of a small statue, badly mutilated, preserved in the local Museum at Palmyra (*Tadmorea* 35). The goddess is also mentioned in an altar inscription of August, 159. The text runs as follows:

1. [dkrn] ṭb lšlmt wl’ḥyh gny’ [ṭby]’ wškry’ ‘bd rp’l br
2. [bwl]m’ br nwrbl ‘l ḥyyhy [w‘l]ḥyy bnwhy byrḥ ’b
3. [šn]t 470

(Cantineau, *Syria* 12 [1931] 134-135.)

A pious remembrance to *šlmt* and her brother, the good and bountiful genii. (This is what) Rafael son of Bōlemmeh son of Nurbel erected for his life and the lives of his sons in the month Ab, the year 470.

The reading of the name Bōlemmeh is due to Milik in *Syria* 44 (1967) 295. The text has been discussed in *PNO*, p. 156, by Starcky, who believes that the brother of the goddess is *šlmn*. But the interpretations of the divine names *šlmn* and *šlmt* necessarily rest on shaky grounds, for the root *šlm* is attested in the entire ancient Near East since the first Semitic texts started to appear.

Shai‘ al qaum

This god is to be considered another protector of caravans. His Arab name means "Protector of the people," or "the One who accompanies the people" (Cooke, *NSI*, p. 304), and this suggests that his cult was particularly favored by the nomads. At Palmyra, a Nabataean horseman made an offering of two altars to the god in the following terms:

1. [t]rtn ‘lwt’ ’ln ‘bd ‘bydw br ‘nmw
2. [b]r š‘dlt nbṭy’ rwḥy’ dy hw’ prš
3. [b]ḥyrt’ wbmšryt’ dy ‘n’
4. lšy‘ ’l-qwm ’lh’ ṭb’ wškr’ dy l’

5. štʾ ḥmr ʿl ḥywhy wḥyy mʿyty
6. wʿbdw ʾḥwhy wšʿdlt brh byrḥ
7. ʾlwl šnt 443 wdkyr zbydʾ br
8. šmʿwn br blʿqb gyrh wrḥmh qdm
9. šyʿ ʾl-qwm ʾlhʾ ṭbʾ wdkyr kl
10. mʿyd ʿlwtʾ ʾln wʾmr dkyryn
11. . . . ʾln klhwn bṭb

(*CISem.* II, 3973.)

These two altars have been made [i.e. erected] by ʿUbaidu son of ʿAnimu son of Saadallat, a Nabataean of the Rawaḥa (tribe), who was a horseman at Ḥirta and in the camp of ʿAna, to Shaiʿ al-qaum, the good and bountiful god who does not drink wine, for his life and the lives of Muʿithi and ʿAbdu, his brothers, and Saadallat, his son; in the month Elul, the year 443. And remembered be Zebida son of Shimeon son of Belʿaqab, his patron and friend, before Shaiʿ al-qaum, the good god. And remembered be everyone who will visit these altars and say, 'Remembered be all these for good!' (Cooke, *NSI*, p. 304.)

The inscription dates from September, 132.

The Rawaḥa tribe to which ʿUbaidu belonged, one of the Nabataean tribes that had populated the Hauran since at least the first century B.C., was responsible for the diffusion of the cult of Allat at Salḥad (pp. 55-56). The ancestor of the Rawaḥa was Q̣aṣiu, whose son is recorded in A.D. 56 as the devotee who first established the cult of the goddess in that region. The ʿUbaidu who settled at Palmyra was a member of that illustrious family, which seems to have kept its traditions intact. ʿUbaidu's offering to the god "who does not drink wine" clearly defines Shaiʿ al qaum as a god of nomads. The Nabataeans preserved alongside their successful history the nomadic character of their culture. Diodorus Siculus explicitly says of the Nabataeans that "it is their custom neither to plant grain, set out any fruit-bearing tree, use wine, nor construct any house; and if any one is found acting contrary to this, death is his penalty" (19.94.3). But the Nabataeans did not remain for long the nomadic tribes described by Diodorus, for Strabo presents a different picture of Nabataean daily life (16.4.21, 26; *Pagan God,* p. 94). Some tribes, however, must have had members who remained attached to primitive traditions, as seems to have been the case of the ʿUbaidu family among the Rawaḥa. ʿUbaidu himself could have had military assignments at Ḥirta and ʿAna, i.e. in the region which formed the eastern frontier of the Palmyrene (Starcky, *Syria* 40 [1963] 53), because of his mobile type of life. But he had obviously been in contact with the metropolis, where he had made some friends, for lines 7-8 of the inscription refer to Zebida as "his patron and friend." Here, *gyr* means not "guest," namely, the receiver of hospitality, but rather the giver of hospitality (Cooke, *NSI*, p. 305); ʿUbaidu, a foreigner in the city, could hardly consider Zebida his protégé.

The votive act of ʿUbaidu remains to be matched at Palmyra. This is the only inscription that mentions the name of Shaiʿ al qaum. His cult is fully attested in the Safaitic inscriptions and is also present in Nabataean territory, albeit less frequently. The divine name appears in a graffito on the wall opposite the Diwan of Hegra, in North Arabia (Jaussen and Savignac, *Mission*, I, pp. 221 and 405-421). And a Nabataean inscription from the Hauran, dated in A.D. 96, during the reign of Rabbel, records the dedication of an *ʾrktʾ* to the god (Dussaud and Macler, *Voyage archéologique*, pp. 187-188; Teixidor, *Gaster Festschrift*, p. 405).

Shaiʿ al qaum was a protector of the nomads as well as the leader of their caravans. In this respect the parallelism between him and the angel of Yahweh in Exodus 23:20 is enlightening. Shaiʿ al qaum was not a god of the Zeus type but rather his angel, and consequently his association with *bʿltk* on tessera *RTP* 332 is not surprising. Here, the name of the god comes after that of the goddess who is called *bʿltk*, i.e. one of the denominations that Allat/Astarte received in the liturgy of the temple of Bel (see above, pp. 57, 60, 61).

In the Phoenician milieu from which the divine appelative *bʿltk* must have come Astarte and Tanit often associated themselves with youthful gods. This partnership mirrors an ancient tradition the first elements of which are neatly present in the early Mesopotamian literature. Ishtar is portrayed in this literature as the goddess of war and of sexual love and procreation. She is depicted as possessing a determined personality and a gifted shrewdness that allow her to manipulate events for her own benefit. In the

Epic of Gilgamesh, when the hero returned victorious to his city of Erech after having defeated the monster Huwawa, Ishtar saw him in his full virile beauty and offered herself to him. But Gilgamesh rejected her, thus dooming her rage against him. Ishtar forced her father, Anu, to create the heavenly bull, and the contest between heroes and gods started. Gilgamesh discovered death when his friend Enkidu was condemned by the gods to die in order to pay for Gilgamesh's arrogance. This is one of the many episodes that form the stupendous story of Gilgamesh. An analogous tale about a youth who rejected the love of a goddess is preserved in the Ugaritic poem of Aqhat son of Daniel. Indeed, very few folk literatures of the world lack similar epics in which only a few literary strokes suffice to render the vicissitudes through which human beings passed from nature into civilization.

But the hero does not always displease the goddess. The variations on the theme of the courtship of a handsome and sturdy divine youth by a goddess can be exemplified in the myth of Adonis. To be sure, here our concern is not with the myth itself but with the cultural fact that the myth embodies. Northwest Semitic inscriptions, like literary texts, often couple a goddess and a young god, but the laconic wording of these religious texts does not allow for much theological reflection. The inscriptions are merely expressions of popular piety from which folk tales and epics must derive some of their themes. At Palmyra elements of Phoenician extraction can be found in the association of *blty* ("my Lady," which is equivalent to the name of *Baalat,* the Byblian goddess) and Tammuz on two tesserae (*RTP* 218, 219). Other pertinent parallels are the tesserae *RTP* 272 through 280 on which Allat or the Gad of Taimi is coupled with Malakbel. The association of Shaiʿ al qaum, a divine leader, with *bʿltk* must belong to the same category of religious motifs.

The inscriptions often mention special divine beings to whom the Palmyrenes give the title *gd,* Gad, namely, the Fortune or Tyche of towns, tribes, or individuals. But the inscriptions fail to outline the difference that existed between the Gad and *ginnaya,* genius. If some texts from the epigraphical material that is available are taken into account, it is possible to go so far as to say that the Gad personified the especial providence reserved by a god or a goddess for an individual, a group of individuals, or a town, whereas *ginnaya* designated a specific class of divine beings whose function was to be guardians, a task that fully equates them to the Judeo-Christian angels. Before elaborating this tentative description of the two terms the texts in which the Gad is mentioned ought to be quoted.

The Gad Taimi

This deity is mentioned together with Malakbel on several tesserae: *RTP* 273-277 and 279. Another tessera (*RTP* 135) bears on one side the names *Gad Taimi* and *Malakbel*; the inscription on the other side reads: *bl wbny bwn’*, "Bel and the Bene Bonne." Taimi was the name of the ancestor of a large family. His Gad, together with Malakbel and Atargatis, receives the epithet "ancestral god" in a bilingual inscription of 140. The text, written on a pedestal, runs as follows:

1. Ἡ βουλὴ
2. Ἀο[φ]άλειν Αἱράνου τοῦ Σαβᾶ τοῦ
3. [Αἱρ]άνου τοῦ Βωννέους ἐπανγει-
4. [λά]μενον αὐτῇ ἐπίδοσιν αἰωνίαν
5. [κα]ὶ θυσίαν καὶ ἕ[τε]ρα ἀναθέματα
6. [Μα]λαχβήλῳ καὶ Τύχῃ Θαιμεῖος καὶ
7. [Ἀτα]ργάτει πατρῴοις θεοῖς τειμῆς καὶ
8. μνήμης χάριν. Ἔτους ανυ′ Πανήμου

9. ṣlm’ dnh dy ’ḥply br ḥyrn šb’ br
10. ḥyrn bwn’ š[‘]t dy ‘bdt lh bwl’ dy
11. mgd lh ḥ[r]m’ l‘lm’ w[m]qlwt’ w’m[r]
12. mḥrm[n] lmlkb[l] w[g]d tymy wl‘tr‘th
13. ’lh[y’] ṭb[y’. . .]t[. . .] yqrh byrḥ
14. [qnyn] šnt 451

(*CISem.* II, 3927.)

(*Greek.*) "The Senate to ʾAḥofali son of Hairan son of Saba son of Hairan son of Bonne, who has endowed it (the Senate) with an everlasting contribution, and a sacrifice, and other votive offerings to Malakbel and to the Gad Taimi and to Atargatis, the ancestral deities. To his honor and memory. Year 451, month of Panemos."

(*Palmyrene.*) "This statue is of ʾAḥofali son of Hairan son of Saba son of Hairan son of Bonne (of the Bene) Šaʿat, which the Senate erected for him because he provided the Senate with an endowment for ever and a holocaust, and he has promised votive offerings to Malakbel and to the Gad Taimi and to ʿAttar-ʿatteh, the good deities, ... To his honor. In the month Tammuz, the year 451" (July, 140).

The inscription has been interpreted correctly only in recent years; see Milik, *Dédicaces*, pp. 3, 73; Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, pp. 51-52. The former rightly proposed the reading [*m*]*qlwtʾ* instead of [ʾ]*qlwtʾ* suggested by *CISem.* The term, of Akkadian origin, means "burnt sacrifice; holocaust," and appears once in a papyrus of Elephantine; see Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, no. 33:10. The word *ḥrmʾ* refers to what has been set apart to be used for cultic purposes by the members of the Senate. Aḥofali's donation thus provides the means that will guarantee the performance of the holocaust.

The genealogy of the family can be completed by the inscriptions in *Inventaire des inscriptions de Palmyre* IX, 20 (Greek: A.D. 56; Palmyrene: A.D. 60), and the trilingual text published by Rodinson in *Syria* 27 (1950) 137-142. Starting with Aḥofali's father, the genealogy consists of Hairan—Saba—Hairan—Bonne—Rabbel—Bonne—ʿAttenatan, who was called Bar Šaʿat—and Taimi (Milik, *Dédicaces*, pp. 72-73). They were members of the tribe of the Bene Mitha. Perhaps the best-known member of this family of long descent was Hairan son of Bonne to whom the priests of Bel dedicated a statue in A.D. 56. In A.D. 74 the Senate erected a column in his honor. The text, written in Latin, Greek, and Palmyrene, calls him "pium et philopatrin" (*Tadmorea* 2B; Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 226). A son of Hairan, Bonne was very likely the president of the Senate (*plhdrw*, πρόεδρος) when the last fiscal law of Palmyra was issued on April 18, 137 (*CISem.* II, 3913).

The name of Šaʿat, Aḥofali's ancestor, is of interest for the study of the cult of the Gad Taimi. According to the inscriptions, this illustrious family goes back at least to the middle of the first century B.C., for eight generations separate Aḥofali from Taimi, whose Fortune became the Gad of the tribe of the Bene Mitha as the Gad of Yediʿebel had become the patron deity of the Bene

Maazin (see pp. 23, 55-56, 61). But the association of Taimi’s Gad with Atargatis conveys the conclusion that his family before settling at Palmyra had sojourned in northern Syria, unlike the Bene Maazin, who came to Palmyra from the west.

There is a branch of the Bene Mitha whose members first appear in a funerary inscription of 9 B.C. (*CISem.* II, 4109). Several inscriptions state that members of the tribe were prominent at Palmyra during the first part of the first century of our era (see *CISem.* II, 4111, 4112, 4119; *Syria* 12 [1931] 130-131, no. 11; see also Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 63). By this time the Bene Mitha were linked to the Bene Maazin by family ties, as is reported in a Palmyrene inscription written on a column of the temple of Baal Shamin:

1. byrḥ ṭbt šnt 363
2. ‘mwd’ dnh qrbt ’mtlt b[r]t
3. br‘’ br ‘tntn dy mn bnt myt’
4. ’tt tym’ br blḥzy br zbdbl dy
5. mn pḥd bny m‘zyn lb‘lšmn ’lh’
6. ṭb’ wškr’ ‘l ḥyyh wḥyy bnyh
7. w’ḥyh

(*BS* 11.)

In the month Tebet, the year 363 (January, A.D. 52), this column was offered by Amtallat daughter of Baraa son of ‘Attenatan, who is from the tribe of the Bene Mitha, wife of Taima son of Belḥazai son of Zabdibel, who is from the tribe of the Bene Maazin, to Baal Shamin, the good and bountiful god, for her life and the lives of her children and her brother(s).

The expression *mn bnt myt’*, instead of the usual *mn bny myt’*, indicates that the members of the tribe are the "sons" or, in the case of Amtallat, the "daughters" of a common ancestor, as Dunant, who published the inscription, has pointed out (*BS*, p. 26).

In the tribe of the Bene Mitha the many Arabic names of its members surely stress their Arab origin, but names such as ‘Attenatan or *khylw* seem to indicate the presence among them of Aramaean elements as well (Stark, *PNPI*, pp. 92, 108). Furthermore, the Bene Mitha were worshipers of ‘Attar-‘atteh (Atargatis). The bilingual inscription of 140 on the statue dedicated to Aḥofali clearly lists the Gad Taimi and Atargatis as two different goddesses. Representation of the Gad Taimi as a Tyche on the tesserae *RTP* 277, 278, and 280 would allow for her identification with Allat/Astarte. But the religious or political role of the individual Gads is altogether unknown today. In some instances only the name of the individual or the tribe has been preserved, as in *RTP* 130: *'gn bl gd blm'*, "Symposium of Bel, the Gad of Bōlemmeh" (this name, which means "Bol is Mother, ' has been interpreted after the Greek name Βωλεμμέους of *Tadmorea* 21). In the case of the Gad of Yedi‘ebel (p. 55), the Fortune of an individual who was the ancestor of the Bene Maazin, the texts seem to support the identification of the deity with Allat/Astarte.

More interesting are the inscriptions that mention the Fortunes of cities or villages. The most important ones are, of course, the Gads of Palmyra and Dura-Europos.

The Gad of Tadmor

The goddess's name, *gd tdmr*, appears on a broken stele after the name of the god Aglibol (*Tadmorea* 18). Owing to its bad preservation, the inscription is unfortunately useless. On a relief from Dura-Europos (Pl. XXVIII), dated in 159 (see below), the goddess is called *gd' dy tdmwr* (*Inv. D-E* 31-32) and is portrayed seated on rocks with her right foot resting on a female bust that personifies the spring of Efca at Palmyra. The artist has represented the spring as a nude woman with her right hand holding her breast and her left arm stretched out as if she was swimming (Perkins, p. 80, pl. 32). A lion accompanies Fortune, which suggests the association of the goddess with Atargatis, the Syrian goddess. She is flanked on the right by Victory, depicted in the act of crowning Fortune, and on the left by the donor of the monument, Hairan son of Maliku son of Naṣor, whose robes show him to be a priest ready to perform the incense sacrifice.

The Gad of Dura-Europos

A relief of 159 (Pl. XXIX), a companion to the relief representing the Gad of Palmyra described above, portrays the Gad of Dura-Europos as Zeus Olympios, the protector god of the Seleucids

(Rostovtzeff, *CRAI* 1935, pp. 290-304). Zeus is seated between two eagles, and at his left is a figure who offers him a wreath. The inscription identifies the figure as Seleucus Nicator, the founder of the city. To the left in the relief Hairan son of Maliku, the same priest depicted in the companion relief, is shown offering incense to the god (*Inv. D-E* 28; Perkins, p. 82, pl. 33). The inscription clearly states that the divine figure is a likeness of the Fortune or Tyche of the city:

1. gdʾ dy dwrʾ ʿbd ḥyrn br
2. mlkw br nṣwr byrḥ nysn
3. šnt 470

(*Inv. D-E* 28.)

The Gad of Dura (which) Hairan son of Maliku son of Naṣor erected. In the month Nisan, year 470 (April, 159).

This image of the Tyche of Dura-Europos contrasts with one painted in a fresco in the temple of Bel at Dura-Europos itself (Pl. XXX). In that fresco Julius Terentius, the tribune of the XX Palmyrene Cohort around 239, is depicted sacrificing incense to three gods in military attire and to the Fortunes of Palmyra and Dura-Europos, who are identified by Greek inscriptions. The Fortune of Palmyra in the fresco is similar in appearance to the one rendered in the relief of 159 described previously, whose donor was Hairan son of Maliku. The Fortune of Dura-Europos in the fresco, however, is indeed different from the rendering in the companion relief of 159, for the Gad in the fresco is portrayed not as a Zeus but as a goddess. The presentation is surprising. An explanation of it may be that one of the three military gods shown in the fresco was Bel, i.e. Zeus, which left no room for another image of Zeus. The fresco is artistically balanced; the artist has succeeded in drawing the attention of the spectator to the details of the composition. The tribune and the members of his military unit are packed together on the right side of the panel; on the left side only the gods are pictured. This division in the arrangement of the components of the work is stressed by the standard-bearer of the cohort who holds the vexillum attached to the upper part of a very long staff (Perkins, pp. 44-45). The three gods are unidentified, but they certainly resemble the triad of Bel, Yarhibol, and Aglibol worshiped at Palmyra. The god in the middle, who is the tallest of the group, holds a celestial globe. He is undoubtedly the one to whom the temple was dedicated: Zeus Megistos Keraunios (Cumont, *Fouilles*, pp. 355-356, 387, nos. 1 and 25).

In the fresco, the Fortune of Dura-Europos has been portrayed after the model provided by the statue of the Tyche of Antioch by Eutychides. The Fortune of Dura-Europos wears a crenellated crown and rests her foot on the figure of a bearded male that personifies the Euphrates; the Fortune poses her left hand on the head of a nude child who may symbolize the city itself (Cumont, ibid., p. 97). The dramatic transformation in the iconography of the Fortune, at one time likened to a Zeus, at another to a seated goddess, calls for examination of the current interpretation of the term Gad.

In the Greco-Roman Near East the Gad was usually considered synonymous with the Fortune or Tyche. In the relief erected by Hairan and dated April, 159, the figure of Zeus is referred to as the *Gad* and so is the statue of the goddess presented by the same Hairan in that year (Pl. XXVIII-XXIX). This goddess, the Gad of Palmyra, is reproduced in the fresco from Dura-Europos in the same fashion (Pl. XXX); there the inscription identifies her: Τύχη Παλμύρων. In the fresco, however, the figure of Zeus as the Gad of Dura-Europos (*gd’ dy dwr’*) yields to the figure of a goddess who is called Τύχη Δούρας. The ambiguous representation of the Gad of Dura-Europos clearly demonstrates that any divine being could become the protector of individuals, families, cities, rivers, or gardens. The *Gad*, then, stood for a theological concept of providence rather than for the reality of an individual deity.

That divine beings presided over stars, natural phenomena, or individuals was equally accepted by pagans and Christians. The doctrine of the angels was incorporated from Jewish literature and traditions into Christian thinking and became an important element of daily life: even the beasts have their own angel, Hermas said in the *Shepherd* (Vis. 4.2.4). The theological concept of angels stems from the idea of Creation professed by the Judeo-Christian tradition. The duties of the angels, Origen says, were arranged by God, who assigned a particular task to each one of them. And duties were distributed according to merits and God's righteous judgment (*De principiis* 8.1). Celsus himself seems to have accepted this doctrine (*Contra Celsum*, 5.25; see *Pagan God*, p. 16).

This doctrine, to be sure, provides an adequate background for the study of the terms *gad* and *ginnaya* (plu. *ginnayê*) in the Palmyrene inscriptions, but whatever their theological implications the two terms should not be discussed in the light of the speculations that were in fashion among the Gnostics. The inscriptions may occasionally reflect trends in the contemporary philosophy, but for the most part they are alien to that exclusive form of knowledge. On the basis of the archaeological evidence it seems possible to argue that the *ginnayê* at Palmyra constituted a specific category in the pantheon similar to that of the angels in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The *gad*, on the other hand, personified the divine providence wherever it made itself present. Was it believed to be an extension of the power of the supreme god? If so, the *gad* can also be equated to an angel. To St. Augustine the angels were "virtutes" of the Creator (*Epist.* 91:202; in Migne, *PL* 33.315). Cicero had already made Balbus state in *De natura deorum* (2.60-62) that to the minds of many people the power or the gifts of the gods had often become gods in their own right. These *virtutes* of God are therefore conceived as extensions of his divine might.

In discussing *gad* and *ginnaya* it should be borne in mind that Palmyra absorbed various ethnic groups, among them Aramaeans and Arabs. The two terms, then, may very well belong to two different cultural environments: the term *gad* derives from a common Semitic root (Huffmon, *APNM*, p. 179)—at Palmyra it seems to be of Aramaic origin—whereas the term *gny*ʾ may derive from Arabic *jinn* (Starcky, *Syria* 26 [1949] 69-70). But both terms would indicate the same religious fact, namely, God's providence through his ministers.

The angels did not help God in creating, but they are his agents. In Jewish and Judeo-Christian circles they are referred to as "messengers" (sing. *malakah*) and as "watchers" (sing. *ʿîr*, from

Akkadian *eru*; see *CAD*, vol. 4:E [1958], p. 326). In Daniel 4:13 the angel is the watcher. The idea is found in the Apocryphal writings. In the Book of Enoch the angels are "the Watchers and the Holy Ones" (see Milik, *Books of Enoch*, p. 144). The same conception was cherished by the Syriac writers. When emphasis is placed on the role of the angels as "watchers" rather than "messengers" the mission of the angel becomes identical with that of the "eye of the king," a mission that was performed by certain officers of the Persian empire (Fitzmyer, *Genesis Apocryphon*, p. 72; *Pagan God*, p. 12).

Zechariah in his fifth vision gives an exceptional description of the expression "the eyes of the Lord." In the King James version the passage runs as follows:

> And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof (4:2-3).

To the prophet's question "What are these, my lord?" the angel answered: "They are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth" (4:10). The olive branches, "which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves" (4:12), filled the purpose of keeping the lamps burning, with the result that the surveillance of the earth was uninterrupted (Oppenheim, *JAOS* 88 [1968] 175). The surveillance was also omnipresent, and it is not surprising to find that the divine providence was given the personality of a god. Seneca asked: "Vis illum (deum) providentiam dicere? Recte dices" (*QNat.* 2.45.2). However different its cultural milieu, the remark is pertinent. To the Stoics the deity ruled the universe through Fate. To the author of Daniel 4:17 the actual governance of the world is delegated by the Most High to the "watchers."

There is no hint in the Palmyrene inscriptions so far known that terms such as the Gad and *ginnaya* equate with *malakah* or *ʿîr*. The notion of the Gad, however, evolved throughout the first millennium B.C. In Genesis 30:11 as well as in several biblical personal names, in the Hebrew ostraca of Samaria (*KAI* 184, 185), and in toponyms the Gad stands for the Canaanite or Aramaean deity of luck. The Gad's cult is clearly reprimanded in Isaiah 65:11. In Hellenistic and Roman times religion became more personal, and the Gad took over the characteristics of a tutelary deity for individuals, territories, natural phenomena, etc. The Gad of an individual or a family and the Palmyrene *ginnaya* of a village or territory can thus be assigned to the category of the angels, champions of the nations, or guardians of individuals known to the Jewish tradition (Moore, *Judaism*, I, pp. 403-405). In some Christian circles of the first centuries the cult of the angels practiced by the Jews was a matter of scandal; see, for instance, the *Kerygma Petri* ("The Preaching of Peter") as preserved by Clement of Alexandria in *Stromata* 6, ch. 5, or the *Apology* of Aristides (14.4), who seems to have used the *Kerygma*. The charge against the Jews, of course, was soon forgotten, for the Christians themselves accepted the cult of the angels, as Justin admits in a somewhat controversial passage of his first *Apology* (1.6).

A Palmyrene bas-relief (Pl. XVIII) found by the Syrian archaeological mission in the area of the temple of Nebo may cast some light on the cult of the Gad at Palmyra. The monument portrays a goddess seated on a throne, richly dressed, and wearing a polos. She is probably Allat or Astarte. Behind the throne an eagle with a twig of oak stands on a column. To the right of the goddess there is a dog. The goddess rests her foot on the figure of a youth partly shown and clothed in a pleated tunic. Even though the artist did not represent water anywhere, nor is the figure represented as if swimming, the youth seems to be the embodiment of the spring of Efca. Beside the goddess stands a female figure whose crenellated crown characterizes her as the Gad or Fortune. Indeed she must be the Gad of the city, holding in her right hand a branch of olive. Whatever the meaning of this symbol may be, the Gad is portrayed as obviously outranked by the seated goddess. The inscription that appears at the base of the monument is too damaged to offer any information (Bounni, *AAS* 15 [1965] 87-98; Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 165), but the artist has shown the Gad in a subordinate position which can be best described as that of an angel or minister of Allat/Astarte.

There is epigraphical evidence supporting St. Augustine's belief that the angels were *virtutes dei* in two Latin inscriptions from Dacia. One, from Sarmizegetusa, is dedicated to: "Deo Aeterno" (namely, Jupiter Dolichenus) "et Iunoni et Angelis"; the other, from Apulum, is formulated in a different manner: "Virtutibus Dei Aeterni, Aeterno" and probably ["Iunoni"]; see Milik, *Dédicaces*, pp. 435-437. The latter author has also presented archaeological evidence that refers to the angels as "the hand" of the deity. The idea is particularly appealing in a Nabataean inscription from Ṣammet el-Baradan, in the Hauran, written in Greek and addressed to:

’Ιλααλγῃ καὶ τῷ ἀνγέλῳ αὐτοῦ ’Ιδαρουμᾳ.

The god Ilah-el-Ğî is the Nabataean god of el-Ğî, at the entrance of el-Siq, in the Wadi Musa, and his angel is called "the Raised Hand," an appellative that is plastically represented on a Nabataean coin of 49 B.C. in the Cabinet des Médailles (Paris); see Milik, ibid., pp. 428-431, pl. XIII, 2; see also Meshorer, *Nabataean Coins*, pp. 25-26, pl. 2:17 and 19.

The angel, then, is an extension of the divine power, and no text can offer better ground for speculation on this matter than the Latin inscriptions addressed by a certain Gaionas to: "I. O. M. Angelo Heliopolitano." One was found at Ostia and the other in the Syrian temple of Rome, and both can be dated between 176 and 180; see Milik, *Dédicaces*, pp. 432-433. The Heliopolitan angel is Jupiter himself worshiped in the angel who makes him visible to the faithful. Seyrig noted that the representations of Jupiter (Baal Shamin) at Baalbek, in the region of Byblos (Cumont, *Syria* 8 [1927] 163-168; Renan, *Mission de Phénicie*, p. 290, pl. 32:2), on the coins of Tripolis (Hill, *B. M. Coins, Phoenicia*, pl. 43:12), and in the Nabataean temple of Siʿa, in the Hauran, all show the supreme god accompanied by images of the Sun god. Far from purporting an assimilation of Jupiter to the Sun god, the artists wanted to convey the idea of Jupiter's epiphany: the supreme god manifesting himself by means of the solar disk (Seyrig, *Syria*, 10 [1929] 344-347). Similarly, in the Palmyrene bas-relief (Pl. XVIII) of the seated goddess and the Gad the latter is likely to be the personification of the former’s providence over Palmyra. This would explain the lower rank of the Gad and yet her close association with the goddess.

The Gad of the Village

In the inscriptions the name is spelled *gd qryt’*, *gdh dy qryt’*, *gd’ dy qrt’*. The correct translation of the word *qiryah* is uncertain. In the papyri of Elephantine *beel qiryah* has the meaning of "civilian" in contrast to *beel degel*, "soldier" (Porten, *Archives from Elephantine*, p. 35). In the text of the Tariff of Palmyra the plural form *qry’* clearly stands for the villages surrounding Palmyra (not necessarily the modern suburbs); see *CISem.* II, 3913:112. The Syriac *qeritha* means "town" but also "village" (κώμη; see Luke 10:38) or even "field" (ἀγρός; see Matthew 19:29). The basic meaning of the term being a meeting place, the Palmyrene expression *gd qryt’* can properly be rendered by "the Gad of the locality," a *genius loci* whoever the deity may be.

The cult of this Gad is attested twice in the Palmyrene. A relief from Khirbet Ramadan erected by a certain Belḥazai in 149/150 represents a female figure which is identified by the text as "the Gad of the hamlet" (*PNO*, no. 51). The head and the legs are missing. An altar inscription of 238/239 from Khirbet Farwan mentions the Gad of the locality in a more elaborate manner:

1. ‘bd wmwd’
2. ‘bdbl lrḥmn’
3. ṭb’ wlgdh dy
4. qryt’ wlgd’
5. dy gny’ šnt
6. 550

(*PNO* 42.)

‘Abdibel erected (it) in thanksgiving to the Compassionate one, the good, and to the Gad of the village and to the Gad of the gardens. Year 550 (A.D. 238/239).

A similar inscription is found on an altar from Arak, 28 km to the northeast of Palmyra. The text reads as follows:

1. ʿlt' dy ʿbd
2. mlkw br
3. mrbn'
4. lyrḥbwl
5. lšq' l'rq
6. lgd' dy qrt[']
7. l'lh' škr[']
8. šnt 520...
9. byrḥ nysn

The altar which Maliku son of *mrbn'* erected to Yarhibol, to the one who irrigates Araq, to the Gad of the locality, the bountiful god. Year 520 (A.D. 209) ... In the month Nisan.

The inscription has been published by Starcky with a very valuable commentary in *MUSJ* 38 (1962) 132-139. The reading of the patronymic is uncertain. The *mem* could be a dittography of the previous line. The name *rbn'*, Rabbana, is known; see Starcky, ibid., p. 133, note 3.

The inscription is dedicated to Yarhibol, who seems to have been known in the village as "the One who irrigates Araq," an epithet which may point out one of Yarhibol's functions, namely, to protect the springs, for at Palmyra the god is "the patron" of Efca (*Pagan God*, pp. 110-112). According to the inscription, Yarhibol was also the *genius loci*. This confirms the thesis that any Palmyrene deity could be a tutelary of individuals, tribes, or localities.

The epithet "Gad of the gardens" (*gd' dy gny'*) that appears in the inscription from Khirbet Farwan (see above) and on a bas-relief (Pl. XXXI: 1) from the temple of Bel at Palmyra (p. 63) refers to an unknown deity. In the second case the possibility that the Gad of the gardens is Bel himself cannot be excluded. He is most likely the deity who receives the epithet "the Gad of the olive tree" (*gd mšḥ'*) on tesserae *RTP* 131 and 132. The two tesserae, almost identical, represent Bel wearing a polos and, in 131, a diadem of stiff material with its ends standing out horizontally (Colledge, *Art of Palmyra*, p. 139).

CHAPTER FIVE

ORIENTAL DEITIES

Sadrafa

A stele in the British Museum (Pl. XXXII) dedicated to Sadrafa shows him bearded, in military dress, wirh a cuirass over his sleeved tunic. He wears a short cloak, grasps a spear, and holds a shield. On the god's left shoulder is a scorpion, and a snake entwines the spear: these two beasts are Sadrafa's animals. The Palmyrene inscription dates the relief to May, A.D. 55. The text reads as follows:

1. byrḥ ’yr šnt 366 mṣb’
1. dnh nṣb ‘tntn br zbd‘th tšbb
3. lšdrp’ ’lh’ ṭb’ dy yh’
4. gyr bh hw wbny byth klhn

(*CISem.* II, 3972.)

In the month Iyyar, the year 366 (May, A.D. 55), ‘Attenatan son of Zabde‘ateh *tšbb* erected this stele to Sadrafa, the good god, in order to become a votary in his (temple), he and all the members of his house.

The interpretation of *tšbb* as the personal name of an ancestor of ‘Attenatan was first proposed by Ingholt in *Berytus* 2 (1935) 115-116, who in 1925 had excavated the tomb of ‘Attenatan. For the meaning of the term *ger* in the Near East during the Persian and Greco-Roman period, see *Pagan God*, pp. 12-13, note 28.

A new reading of another text which supposedly concerns Sadrafa's cult has been proposed by Milik in *Dédicaces*, p. 85. The inscription runs as follows:

1. ṣlm’ dnh dy [bl]šwry
2. br ḥggw br blšwry b‘’
3. ’qymw lh š*dr*p’ wkmr’
4. lyqrh mn dy špr lhn wl
5. ’lhyhwn byrḥ knwn šnt
6. 3[..]

(*CISem.* II, 3929.)

This (is) the statue of Belšuri son of Hagegu son of Belšuri Baa (which) Sadrafa and the priests erected to him, in his honor, because he was considerate of them and of their gods. In the month Kanun, year 3[..] (November, A.D. 30 to 50).

For the date, see Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 88.

Line 3 is damaged in the middle, and this makes the restoration of the name Sadrafa altogether questionable. Moreover, the bare mention of the name Sadrafa without the usual epithets "god" or "good god" is indeed suspicious. Equally surprising is the expression "their gods." This can be a reference to Sadrafa and Duʿanat. At Palmyra Sadrafa is often mentioned together with Duʿanat (*d*[*w*]*ʿnt*), "the One of ʿAnat," i.e. the (supreme) god of ʿAnat, a town about fifty miles down the Euphrates River from Dura-Europos. Duʿanat seems to have been the one god with whom Sadrafa associated himself. Their names appear on a tessera (*RTP* 329); they are invoked as "good gods" in a Palmyrene inscription from the Agora dated A.D. 30/31 (*Inv.* X, 145) and again on a relief found by the Swiss archaeological mission in the temple of Baal Shamin (*BS* 58). This monument, badly damaged, shows only the feet and the legs of the two deities, one of them standing on a pedestal. He may be Sadrafa, to whom the inscriptions seem to entrust preeminence.

A cultic relief of Duʿanat (Pl. XXXIII), found at Dura-Europos in a room called an *andron*, or banqueting hall, portrays the god in a frontal pose standing on the back of two griffins. Duʿanat wears military dress. The cuirass, adorned with stars and crosses, is encircled by a knotted girdle. Under the cuirass a long-sleeved tunic falls to the knees. Tight trousers and high laced boots complete the deity's military attire. The god is bearded, and a polos with streamers that reach his shoulders gives him the appearance of a weather god (Perkins, *Art of Dura-Europos*, pp. 77-79). The relief was dedicated by a certain Hadadyaheb son of Zabdibol. Duʿanat is an appellation of Aphlad, as the Greek inscription on the relief indicates (*Rep.*, V, pp. 106-113; Milik, *Dédicaces*, pp. 136-137). Aphlad's name does not appear in the inscriptions of Palmyra, most probably because the name was a local denomination of the god. If *Aphlad* is a composite term meaning "Son of Hadad," *apil-(h)adad* in Assyrian, as some authors believe, the god on the Euphrates could be compared with the god *Barmaren*, "the Son of our Lords," so popular at Hatra.

The presence of a garrison at ʿAnat accounts for the martial aspect of Aphlad, its local Baal. The existence of a military settlement there is disclosed by *CISem.*, II, 3973, a Palmyrene inscription found in 1900. It commemorates the offering made by a Nabataean horseman in service "at Ḥirta and in the camp of ʿAna" to Shaiʿ al qaum. The offering consisted of two altars (see pp. 85-87). For this geographical area in ancient and medieval times, see Musil, *The Middle Euphrates*, pp. 210-213, 345-349. The region formed the eastern frontier of the Palmyrene and had to be protected against Parthian incursions (Starcky, *Syria* 40 [1963] 53).

It cannot be coincidental that the military aspect of Aphlad, the god of ʿAnat, should match the equally military appearance of Sadrafa on the stele in the British Museum or on the Palmyrene tesserae. This iconography seems to have been the product of late developments in Sadrafa's cult.

An early mention of the god is found at Amrit (Marathus), in Syria, (Pl. XXXIV-XXXV), on a stele that has been dated variously. The seventh, or the seventh to the sixth, century B.C. is the earliest date for the Phoenician inscription (Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, p. 131). The text (Pl. XXXV) in three lines reads:

1. nṣb ʾz yt
2. n pls bn [. . .] lʾdny lšdrpʾ
3. kšmʿ ql dbry

"*Pls* son of [. . . .] offered this stele to his Lord Sadrafa because he heard the voice of his words." [1]

The stele depicts a figure standing on a lion and wearing a headdress similar to the Egyptian crown of Upper Egypt. His right hand brandishes a small club, while the left hand holds a lion cub by its hind legs.

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[1] After examination of the inscription on the stele in the Louvre Museum, the reading *ʿbdṣd* proposed by Peckham as the name of *pls*'s father seems to me unlikely. There is room for only four letters. Tentatively I read *ʿbdʾ*.

Later on, a Greek inscription of the fourth century B.C. from Maad, in Lebanon, styles Sadrafa (in Greek *Satrapes*) as "Lord of the Whole World." The inscription is dedicated to:

4. τῶ̣ κυρί-
5. ω̣ ἁγί(ω) κὲ κυ-
6. [ρ]ίω̣ ὅλου
7. [τ]οῦ κόσ-
8. [μ]ου Σατρα-
9. [π]ι

(Starcky, *Syria* 26 (1949) 68-69.)

The cult of Sadrafa became known in the ancient Near East during the Persian period. This is not surprising, for the deity seems to be of Persian origin. The name Sadrafa most probably derives from *ḥštrpty*, which is the Aramaean spelling of the name of a Persian god equated with the Apollo on the stele of Xanthus (Lycia). The stele was found by the French archaeological mission at Xanthus in 1973. It was uncovered in the temple of Leto, the titaness who, according to Greek mythology, was the mother of Artemis and Apollo. It bears an inscription in Greek, Lycian, and Aramaic. The Greek text consists of 35 lines, the Lycian of 41, and the Aramaic of 27. The three texts were made known in a preliminary report published by Metzger, Laroche, and Dupont-Sommer in *CRAI* 1974, pp. 82-93, 115-125, and 132-149. The inscription, dated in 358 B.C., is a decree issued by the people of Xanthus providing for the establishment of the cult of the god of Caunus in their city. The new cult was to have a priest, to be always chosen from the same family (Greek text, lines 9-11), and a ritual consisting of the sacrifice of a sheep every new moon and of an ox every year.[2] The decision of the people of Xanthus to receive the god of one of the towns of Caria was approved by the gods of Xanthus, who were invoked at the end of the inscription to secure the continuity of the new cult. Invitations from the gods of a town to the gods of a neighboring territory to form part of their pantheon were not infrequent in antiquity. These associations always hid subtle political motives, and the stele of Xanthus is not an exception. The presence of Carian names in Lycian territory shows the influence of Caria over Lycia (Houwink ten Cate, *The Luwian Population Groups,* pp. 13-15).

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[2] The Xanthus inscription has been commented on in BES 1975, no. 142, and ibid., 1976, no. 171. For an interpretation of the imprecatory formula different from the one proposed by Dupont-Sommer, see Teixidor, *JNES* 37 (1978) 181-185.

Because Lycia formed part of the Persian empire under the rule of a satrap, the Aramaic text of the inscription can be considered the offical version of the document. But the Greek and Lycian texts do not translate it literally. According to the Greek text, the citizens of Xanthus erected an altar (βωμός) in honor of the god of Caunus. The Aramaic version has avoided the Semitic word for altar, using instead *krp’*, probably an old Iranian term (**karpa*) that can be translated as "cult" (see Mayrhofer, "Kleinasien," p. 278; BES 1976, no. 171). This would confirm Herodotus' remark that Persians did not erect statues, temples, or altars to their gods (1.131). Obviously, the Persian families of Lycia whose names are known today from Greek inscriptions (Robert, *Documents de l'Asie Mineure,* pp. 31-32) continued to practice their religion abroad, and they probably succeeded in making a great number of proselytes. The use in the Aramaic version of the word *komer* for priest and not *magus* (which was otherwise known, as an Aramaic document from Elephantine shows; see Kraeling 4:24) may indicate that in Asia Minor the two terms had not yet become synonymous, as was the case in Hellenistic and Roman times (Frye, *The Heritage of Persia,* p. 76).

In the final lines of the inscription the Greek text mentions Leto and her children, meaning Artemis and Apollo, whereas the Aramaic version names Leto's children, i.e. Artemis and *ḥštrpty.* The equation Apollo-*ḥštrpty* established by the stele is of great interest. Mayrhofer has noticed that Aramaic *ḥštrpty* leads semantically to the composite term **xšaθra-pati,* which in Iranian would mean "Lord of the Power" (Mayrhofer, p. 279). This epithet indeed seems to disclose the personality of the god Satrapes (in Greek), Aramaicized *šdrp’*, Jewish-Babylonian *šdrps* (BES 1970, no. 73), all three names cognate forms of *ḥštrpty.* The identification of this god with Apollo, on the other hand, reveals a new dimension in

Satrapes/Sadrafa, who is given the epithet "Lord of the Whole Earth" on the stele of Maad and is represented at Amrit and Palmyra (*RTP*, p. 195) with scorpions, snakes, and lions. *ḥštrpty*-Sadrafa-Satrapes may have been a forerunner of Mithras in the Persian Near East. In the Avesta Mithras is described as "strong in power," and one of his functions is to be the judge of the living world (Gershevitch, *Avestan Hymn*, pp. 127, 240). Notice should be taken of both the theological thinking that underlies the text from Xanthus and the successful identification of Mithras with Apollo (and Helios also) in Commagene during the reign of Antiochus I (see p. 30).

Sadrafa's identification with Apollo was, of course, not exhaustive. Like Reshef, whom the Phoenician inscriptions equate with Apollo (*Pagan God*, p. 91), Sadrafa could render only a few aspects of Apollo's personality. The oriental god (Pls. XXXII, XXXIV), to be sure, does not have an Apollonian aspect on the stele in the British Museum. In fact, Sadrafa's representation there differs greatly from the one on the stele from Amrit; the countenance of the god on the latter monument, in spite of his Egyptian crown, comes near Apollo's classic image, and the disk on the crescent that surmounts the divine figure portrayed there helps to enhance the cosmic role of Sadrafa. But the theological implications of the stele of Amrit, and of Sadrafa's cult in general, remain unknown. If the equation Sadrafa-Apollo rests on solid grounds, the thesis that Sadrafa had been the forerunner of Mithras in the ancient Near East cannot be more than a conjecture because by the time Apollo was equated with Mithras in Commagene the cult of Sadrafa had become known at Antas, in Sardinia (Fantar in *Ricerche puniche ad Antas*, p. 80), and in North Africa (*KAI* 77, 119, 127), where the god must have developed local characteristics. This could have been the case at Palmyra, where the cult of Sadrafa is known but, so far, not that of Mithras.

Nebo

The temple of Nebo at Palmyra is situated to the south of the monumental arch that leads into the Grand Colonnade. (Pl. II:2). The sacred precinct consisted of a court surrounded by porticoes and of a cella (20.60 m by 9.15 m), which stands on a podium 2.15 m high, 23.20 m long, and 16.60 m wide. The cella has a northern thalamus and opens to the south. In front of the podium there is a monumental altar similar to the one found in the court of the temple of Baalbek. The area of the temple of Nebo was excavated in 1963/1964 by the Department of Antiquities of Syria. Bounni and Saliby published a report of their archaeological work in *AAS* 15 (1965) 126-136, Arab section: pp. 41-52, plan 3. The temple was uncovered in trench B, namely, in an area in which Wiegand had already made some excavations in 1917.

According to the Syrian archaeologists, the construction of the temple started in the first century A.D. The northern section of the peribolus had to be modified toward the end of the second century A.D. when the Grand Colonnade of Palmyra was built. And this gave the temple its present trapezoidal form.

The inscriptions found in the temple cover a period of some hundred and sixty years: from A.D. 99 to 258/259. But the texts do not yield any relevant information about the god. In general, Palmyrene inscriptions reveal that Nebo's name was frequently used to form theophorous names; see Bounni, *Orientalia* 45 (1976) 52. The tesserae, on the contrary, provide few hints on the cult of Nebo at Palmyra, the pattern of which must have been similar to that of the cult in Babylon. Nebo was the god of writing, wisdom, and power in Babylonia, as his epithets show (Tallqvist, *Akkadische Götterepitheta*, pp. 382-384). Nebo was "the upholder of the world" and the one who gave the scepter to kings. In a treaty of Esarhaddon he is the one "who holds the tablets of fate of the gods" (*ANET*, Suppl., 541). By the ninth century B.C. the popularity of Nebo son of Marduk increased, and during the new Babylonian dynasty Nebo gained preeminence over his father (which is a mythological motif not infrequent in the pantheons of the ancient Near East). Tessera *RTP* 298 seems to reflect Babylonian traditions by showing Nebo's staff, which is the symbol of the god to be interpreted, like the writer's stylus or the ruler's scepter (Jastrow, *Die Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, p. 121).

Tesserae *RTP* 306 to 309 bear the word *qnyt* beside Nebo's name. Unfortunately, the meaning of the term is unknown. Caquot related it to Syriac *qenāytā*, "association" (*RTP*, p. 148); *qnyt nbw* would mean "l'association des fidèles de Nébo" (loc. cit.). Milik thinks that *qnyt*(') means "le citharède," i.e. that Nebo is identified with Apollo playing the cithara (*Dédicaces*, p. 159). This thesis is unconvincing: it fails to give a satisfactory etymology of the term while stressing an aspect of Nebo's cult that most probably became known at Palmyra only when the god was identified with the Greek Apollo. Strabo knew this identification, for he states that Borsippa was a city sacred to Artemis and Apollo (16.1.7), and presumably he knew that Nebo had been its ancestral god. The tesserae, however, raise some doubts about the identification of Nebo with Apollo, even though the editors of *RTP* have repeatedly brought it forward in their book. On tesserae *RTP* 288 and 290 Nebo is represented by a bust, cuirassed and wearing a polos. Tessera *RTP* 119 bears the same image: the bust of Nebo, and not of Bel, with cuirass, polos, and diadem. Nebo is accompanied by a Nike, or Victory, on his left and by a small naked figure with a lyre on his right; beneath the portrayal of the deity the name *nbw* is clearly written. I surmise that the name of the god had to be written, otherwise the presence of Yarhibol and Aglibol on the reverse of the tessera would have led the faithful to believe that the bust represented Bel, the chief god of the Palmyrene triad. It is worth recalling that at Babylon Bel Marduk and Nebo occasionally had interchangeable roles (Dhorme, *Les religions*, pp. 153-155) At Palmyra, Bel and Nebo are mentioned together in tesserae *RTP* 136 and 137, and on a tessera recently published by Dunant Nebo may be replacing Bel because his name accompanies those of Yarhibol and Aglibol (*Le sanctuaire de Baalshamin*, VI, p. 114, no. 4). This document should also help to interpret *RTP* 244, in which the third line is missing.

The figure portrayed on tessera 302 (*RTP*, pl. XLIX), wearing a long tunic and holding a lyre, may be Nebo; the reading *nbw* is uncertain. Another bust with a lyre is represented on tessera *RTP* 237, but there is no indication that the figure is Nebo's. A coarse statuette found at Dura-Europos (Perkins, pl. 49) depicts Nebo dressed in local costume and holding what is believed to be a lyre but what can also represent a tablet and a stylus. The statuette was found in the temple of the Fortunes of Dura-Europos and Palmyra; see *Rep.*, VII-VIII, pp. 218-258, and Perkins, pp. 16-19, 110. A Palmyrene inscription on the pedestal reads as follows:

1. nbw ‘bd zbd’
2. br zbl’

(*Inv. D-E* 34.)

(Statue of) Nebo (which) Zabda son of Zabla erected.

The inscription was also published by Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 163. For the representation of Nebo/Apollo at Hierapolis, see Seyrig, *Syria* 49(1972) 104-108.

Tesserae *RTP* 292 and 297 seem to refer to festivities held at Palmyra in honor of Nebo: the inscriptions they bear must indicate special days of the calendar. Tessera 292: *nbw šb‘t’*. The latter term is probably Akkadian *shaputtu*, the day of the full moon, namely, the middle of the month (the editors of *RTP* interpreted the phrase as a personal name, and Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 164, as meaning "the seventh day"). Tessera 297 has a similar inscription: *nbw 6* (and not 7 as Milik says). The information provided by these tesserae proves to be of little importance whenever an attempt is made to collate them with data from the Babylonian rituals. It is known that Nebo made a yearly visit to Babylon from the sixth to the twelfth day of Nisan in order to participate in the *akîtu* festival (*ANET* 333-334; Saggs, *The Greatness*, p. 387). Consequently the sixth day of Nisan must have been important in the calendar; the festal days of Nebo, however, seem to have been the fourth, eighth, and seventeenth days as well (Langdon, *Babylonian Menologies*, pp. 70, 74-75, 78; Labat, *Hémérologies et ménologies*, pp. 42, 52-55). The so-called Prism B of Esarhaddon makes an incidental reference to the festival of Nebo on the eighth day of the month Adar (*ANET* 290). On the other hand, in interpreting the inscriptions of the two Palmyrene tesserae due attention should be paid to the existence of "lucky" and "unlucky" days in the month; the seventh day, for instance, was among the latter in Mesopotamia. But the information available is too meager to permit any conclusion regarding the Palmyrene calendar.

The association of Bel and Nebo at Palmyra is supported by the tesserae and even by the fact that their temples were built close to each other. The association of the two gods had become proverbial in late Mesopotamian texts. It is recognized by Isaiah 46:1, and it is particularly striking in the letters in which Bel and Nebo are invoked in the introductory sentences (*ANET*, Supp., 626, 627; Dietrich, *Die Aramäer Südbabyloniens*, pp. 42n, 163, no. 62:4). This form of cult spread into Syria. By the eight century B.C. the stele of Sfire (I A 8) bears an invocation to Marduk and his consort and to Nebo and his consort. At Harran in the seventh century B.C. among the worshipers of Nebo there were not only Assyrians but some local followers of the god (Johns, *An Assyrian Doomsday Book*, p. 16). The fervor of the cult is attested by the toponym Kafr Nabu on the Jebel Sim‘an. The jebel itself, according to ibn-Shiḥna in his history of Aleppo, was called the Jebel Nabu.[3] In the thirteenth century the Arab geographer Yaqut repeated the same information and mentioned the ruins still visible today. Yaqut reported the existence of an ancient temple at Kafr Nabu, locally known as the Dome of the Idol.[4]

During the Persian period the cult of Nebo remained very much in favor; at the extremes of the empire Bel and Nebo are mentioned in the Aramaic stele of Daskyleion (Gibson, *SSI* 37) as well as in the Nile Valley. Aramaeans worshiped Nebo at Syene, where he had a famous temple (Hermoupolis papyrus I: 11; Gibson, *SSI*, pp. 129-130). The Aramaic documents of Syene and Elephantine (Grelot, *Documents araméens* 76, 88) acknowledge Nebo's high rank in the pantheon of their Syro-Phoenician communities, to such an extent indeed that the name Nebo was used more often than any other divine name in compounding personal names.

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[3] "La montagne connue aujourd'hui sous le nom de Jabal Sim‘ân portait alors le nom de Jabal Nabô, à cause de l'idole qu'on adorait dans la localité appelée aujourd'hui Kafr Nabô. Les constructions qu'on voit encore dans cette montagne sont l'œuvre des gens qui habitaient autour de l'idole"; see Sauvaget, *"Les perles choisies" d'Ibn Ach-Chiḥna*, p. 15.

[4] The geography, history, and archaeological remains of the site have been studied by Butler, Norris, and Stoever, *Syria: Geography and Itinerary* (Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expedition ..., div. I), pp. 60 and 67-68, and *Architecture*, sect. B: *Northern Syria* (ibid., div. II), pp. 293-294.

The tradition of pairing Bel and Nebo survived Persian times, being found in the early Christian centuries among the Syriac-speaking communities of North Syria. But by then the cult had become stereotyped and the religious value of the formula was elusive, if not nil (*Pagan God*, p. 151).

Herta and Nanai; Nergal

Tessera *RTP* 133 bears the following inscription: *ʾgn bl ḥrtʾ*, "Symposium of Bel [and] Herta." *Ḫertū* is one of the Akkadian epithets of Ishtar and means "wife" (Tallqvist, p. 97; Caquot, *RTP*, p. 182); the tessera, therefore, must refer to the most important divine couple in the pantheon of Palmyra. Tessera *RTP* 134 also mentions Bel and Herta but adds the name of the goddess Nanai (*nny*). The names of Herta and Nanai appear often on the tesserae; see *RTP* 238, 240, 241, and 242, which are inscribed either *ḥrtʾ nny* or *ḥrtʾ wnny*. If Herta personifies Ishtar, it is expected that Nanai will be associated with her, for Inanna/Ishtar and Nanai are closely linked in the Babylonian texts; nonetheless the theological meaning of this relationship is unknown today (Edzard in *Wörterbuch der Mythologie*, pp. 82, 108). The implications of the cult of Herta and Nanai at Palmyra are, of course, equally uncertain. In the first millenium B.C. Tashmetu, Nebo's consort, was identified with Nanai (Edzard, p. 108), and this development in the Babylonian cult of Nebo must have been part of the cultural tradition that Palmyra inherited from the East. An early inscription of November, 6 B.C., mentions Herta and Nanai in company with Reshef, i.e. Nergal, the Mesopotamian god of the netherworld. The inscription, which is honorific, was found in the ruins of the first temple of Bel (Gawlikowski, *Le temple*, pp. 53-56). It reads as follows:

1. byrḥ knwn šnt 307 ʾqymw
2. kmryʾ dy ḥrtʾ ṣlmʾ dnh
3. lʿgylw br ʾydʿn dy mn bny kmrʾ
4. dy ʿbd wqrb hw wbnwhy plgwt
5. [mṭ]ltʾ dh wmšlʾ wbt nḥryʾ w
6. [ʾd]rnʾ lḥrtʾ wlnny wlršp ʾlhyʾ

(*Tadmorea* 17; *Syria* 17 [1936] 268-271.)

In the month Kanun, year 307, the priests of Herta erected this statue to ʿOgeilu son of Aidʿan, from the tribe of the Bene Komare, who, together with his sons, built and offered half of this portico, the *mšlʾ*, the slaughterhouse, and the *andron* to Herta, Nanai, and Reshef, the gods.

Since the first publication of this text by Cantineau, Milik (*Dédicaces*, pp. 220-221) and Gawlikowski (*Le temple*, pp. 61-62) have studied the architectural terms. Cantineau (*Syria* 17 [1936] 269) rightly thought that *bt nḥryʾ* was the slaughterhouse used for the sacrifice of victims. The term *mšlʾ* may refer to "le système de canalisation"; see Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 221.

Nanai, the consort of Nebo at Borsippa, was called Artemis by Strabo (16.1.7), and she must have been known at Palmyra by her Greek counterpart as well, even though so far the name Artemis is rarely attested in the inscriptions (*Inv.* XI, 43; Drijvers, *Antike Welt*, 7 [1976] 36-37). On several tesserae Nanai/Artemis is represented armed with bow and arrows; see *RTP* 285, 286, and 310.

Reshef was a god of Canaanite origin; in Phoenician inscriptions he is identified with Apollo (*Pagan God*, p. 91; Teixidor, *Met. Mus. Journal* 11 [1976] 65). At Palmyra he must have been equivalent to Nergal, the Mesopotamian god, as had been the case at Ugarit, where the official lists of the pantheon clearly show that the Akkadian Nergal was equated with *ršp* (Caquot and Sznycer, *Textes ougaritiques*, pp. 51-52). Nergal's name appears only twice on the Palmyrene tesserae (*RTP* 127, 227); but actually the god's representations are more frequent because he took on the features of Heracles. Seyrig has shown very convincingly that Nergal and Heracles were regarded as identical in monuments and inscriptions at Palmyra (*Syria* 24 [1945] 62-69). But if this thesis can be fully accepted, some of Seyrig's conclusions regarding Nergal and Melqart ought to be reexamined in the light of the extant epigraphical material. To be sure, Melqart, the god "prince" of Tyre (ἀρχηγέτης; *CISem.* I, 122), was a god of vegetation (BES 1974, nos. 49 and 56; ibid., 1975, no. 127); his condition as god of the netherworld and hence his identification with Nergal are, however, mere erudite conjectures. Melqart's personality eludes research. Very often religious inscriptions leave the student perplexed, whereas literary texts elate him.

The divine figure of Heracles does not require an introduction here; portrait and deeds are as familiar now as they were in antiquity. By the first century B.C. the Palmyrenes must have associated him with Nergal/Reshef because a relief published by Seyrig (op. cit., p. 62, pl. 1), to be dated in the first century B.C., shows Heracles together with other gods (see Colledge, *Art of Palmyra,* pp. 45-46). On the relief (Pl. XXXI: 2) the gods are from left to right: Heracles, a goddess, Aglibol, and a god whose radiate halo is larger than those of the goddess and Aglibol. The relief seems to be incomplete, at least on the right. The god represented at the extreme right may be Bel; certainly his is not Malakbel, whose portrait in the monuments is never imposing (see above, pp. 41, 47). This Palmyrene relief of the first century B.C. correlates with the inscription of the priests of Herta mentioning the existence of an area dedicated to Herta, Nanai, and Reshef in the precinct of the first temple of Bel.

The goddess standing to the left of Heracles in the relief is very likely the same goddess that accompanies Nergal on tesserae *RTP* 233, 234, 235, and 236. And the association of Reshef with Herta and Nanai may represent the unfolding of the same motif, namely, the memory of Ishtar's descent into the netherworld and of her dealings with Ereshkigal, from whom Nergal eventually snatched the kingdom of the dead according to an Akkadian myth (*ANET* 103-104). But it is difficult to ascertain how important, if at all, this or any other Mesopotamian myth could have been in the daily life of the Palmyrenes. The inscriptions are so succinct that little room is left to guess an answer.

Nergal is also associated with *bl'str,* Bel'astar, on tessera *RTP* 127, the opposite side of which bears the inscription *bl mkl,* "Bel. Meal." Tessera *RTP* 125 mentions Bel and Bel'astar and bears the representations of a lion and a dog, which were the animals of Allat and Nergal, respectively. The lion as the animal attribute of the goddess may have arrived at Palmyra by several routes, as Colledge has noted, and its use "constitutes a borrowing from the iconography of Syrian Atargatis" (Colledge, *Art of Palmyra,* p. 159). The dog, Nergal's animal, appears in its full splendor in the Hatrean iconography (*Pagan God,* p. 146, n. 11). Notwithstanding the association of Nergal with Belʿastar, the latter is not to be thought of as a name standing for a goddess, be she Ishtar or Allat. Belʿastar is not the name of a god either. It is, rather, a cultic formula, the "epiclesis" of Bel and his consort (see p. 8-9). Here again, the association of Nergal with the goddess seems to be the connection intended, even though only one of her cultic aspects is shown. Whatever idea the Palmyrenes might have had of the goddess whom they called Allat or Astarte, the tesserae clearly indicate that some elements of the epic of the Babylonian Ishtar lingered in their minds.

CHAPTER SIX

THE ANONYMOUS GOD

Of all the cults attested at Palmyra none makes itself more prominent to epigraphists and historians of religion than the cult of the god "whose name is blessed for ever." Yet the student of ancient Palmyra is never more at a loss than when trying to identify the personality of this "anonymous" god. Hundreds of altars were dedicated to him at Palmyra from the first decades of the second century A.D. The dedicatory formula inscribed on them is consistently uniform, but its repetitious character diminishes the epigraphist's curiosity without making the cult less enigmatic to him. The causes that prompted the appearance of the cult remain as yet unknown.

Altars dedicated to the god "whose name is blessed for ever" have been found in many areas of Palmyra, but the great majority of them were uncovered in the immediate vicinity of the spring of Efca (*Pagan God,* p. 122). The common view among scholars is that the anonymous god was Baal Shamin worshiped at a late period under a spiritualized formula meant to hide the cult of the Lord of Heaven. It seems nonetheless paradoxical that the traditional epithet of a supreme god, *ba'al shamîm* (or Aramaic *be'el shamên*), had changed into that of "the one whose name is blessed for ever" when to acknowledge that the god had heaven for his abode may be expected to be the ultimate acceptance of his divine sovereignty. Indeed it is the preeminence of Yahweh as Lord of Heaven that is believed to have been the main theme of the panegyric delivered by Solomon the day the temple of Jerusalem was consecrated (1 Kings 8:12, 27, 43).

Scholars have often tried to elucidate the personality of the anonymous god by equating the formula "the one whose name is blessed for ever" to formulae such as "to Zeus *hypsistos* and *epekoos,*" "to the one, alone, and merciful god," or "to the Lord of the World," all of them present in Greek or Palmyrene inscriptions, on the ground that the name of the god to whom these formulae were addressed is mentioned in none of them. But these formulae suit Bel and Baal Shamin equally well (*Pagan God*, p. 123).

Occasionally the cult of the anonymous god has been compared to the Jewish cult of Yahweh, making of the latter a model to which the former conformed. But similarities here are only apparent. Whereas the Jews did not pronounce the name of their god out of reverence, the Palmyrenes invoked the god "whose name is blessed for ever" because the circumlocution must have acquired a specific meaning the relevance of which excelled that of his own name. This could hardly mean that the name of the god was more blessed than any other divine name in the pantheon. On the other hand, to state that the cult of Baal Shamin at Palmyra became that of the anonymous god as a consequence of the enlightenment enjoyed by the best minds of the city seems gratuitous. Offerings were made to the anonymous god many years before the dedication of the temple of Baal Shamin took place. Altars dedicated to Baal Shamin and to the anonymous god coexisted at the spring of Efca as well as in the Arab quarter of Palmyra. For the "enlightened" individuals of Palmyra to have professed their monotheistic faith in Baal Shamin by worshiping him in the temples of other gods would have been incongruous (*Pagan God*, p. 129).

A Cultic Formula

The formula "the one whose name is blessed for ever" was most probably cultic and as such could be applied to this or that deity even though the inscriptions seem to refer to one particular god. The evasive character of the circumlocution discloses a situation in which traditional forms of worship might have been reshaped in order to accommodate new people and new beliefs. To be sure, the Palmyrenes often omitted the names of their gods in their dedications, using instead cultic formulae such as "Lord of the World," "the Holy Brothers," "Fortune of the tribe," etc. An inscription in the Agora invokes Yarhibol as "the ancestral god" without mentioning his name. His personality becomes obvious only by the context. The text, in Greek and Palmyrene, runs as follows:

1. [‘Η βουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος ’Ιούλιον Αὐρήλιον Μαλιχον] Ουασεου Μαλιχου το[ῦ] Ουασεου Νεβουλα στρατη[γήσαντα τῆς κολωνείας]
2. [καὶ ἀγορανομήσαντα ἐπι]σήμως καὶ φιλοτείμω[ς] ὡς ἐπὶ πᾶσιν μεμαρτυρῆσθαι ὑπό τε τοῦ πατρῷου θεοῦ καὶ τῆς
3. [κρατίστης βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ λαμ]προτάτου ἡγουμένου κα[ὶ] Ουασεω πατρὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσας λειτουργίας ἐκτελέσαντι τειμῆς καὶ μνή-
4. [μης χάριν]

1. ṣlmy’ ’ln tlt’ dy ywlys ’wrlys mlkw br wsḥw br mlkw br wsḥw nbwl’ dy ‘bdt lh bwl’ wdmws [b’sṭrṭgwt’ dy]
2. qlny’ wbrbnšqwth dy špr lhwn wḥsr lhwn mn kysh w‘l hnn shd lh ’lh’ [w]skrt lh mdyth wshd lh [nhyr’ hgmn’ wlwsḥw ’bwh]
3. dy špr bkl ’ḥydw klh lmdyth lyqrh byrḥ ṭbt [šnt. . .]

Inv. X, 115.)

(*Greek.*) [The Senate and People to Julius Aurelius Malichos] Ouaseos son of Malichos son of Ouaseos Neboula, who was strategos [of the Colony (2) and chief of the market] with distinction and zeal; on account of all this the ancestral god, and the (3) [excellent Senate, and the most illu]strious governor have borne witness for him; and for Ouaseos, his father, who fulfilled all his public services. To their honor and mem(4)[ory].

(*Palmyrene.*) (1) These three statues are of Julius Aurelius Maliku son of Washo son of Maliku son of Washo Nebula, which were erected to him by the Senate and People, [because during his tenure of the office of strategos of] (2) the Colony and chief of the market he was thoughtful of them and paid their expenses with his own money; on account of this the god has borne witness for him and his city has congratulated him and [the illustrious governor] has borne witness for him; [and for Washo, his father] (3) who was thoughtful of his city during his tenure [of office]. To their honor. In the month Tebet, [the year . . .].

The two texts are very similar. A noticeable difference is the lack of a Palmyrene term for *leitourgia*. The expression "to be thoughtful of the city in everything" (Starcky), which is usual in the Palmyrene texts, can hardly characterize the degree of response of the honored citizen to his community. Conversely, a Phoenician inscription from the Piraeus (*KAI* 60:8) uses the term *mšrt* for

Greek *leitourgia* to describe the "service" done by an individual to the congregation of Sidonian businessmen living abroad (Cooke, *NSI*, p. 99).

Although neither text mentions Yarhibol, the reference to him is implicit in the expression "to bear witness." No other god at Palmyra bears witness in favor of individuals. By means of oracles Yarhibol played an important part in the life of the city (*Pagan God*, pp. 111-112). The *martyriai* of the god were frequent. The Palmyrene inscriptions express this idea with the verb *šhd* (or *shd*); see Starcky, *Inv.* X, p. 54. For the official congratulations in general, either of Yarhibol or of the public officers, see Seyrig, *Syria* 22 (1941) 246-248.

The Palmyrene inscriptions reflect a popular piety, casting light at the same time on the theological implications of that piety. In the case of Yarhibol's cult it should be recalled that the god was an ancestral deity of the oasis because his cult had flourished in connection with the use of the spring. Archaeological excavations have consistently shown that springs were centers of settled life in ancient times. At Palmyra Yarhibol's devotees could certainly be reckoned among the descendants of the first settlers, who believed that the spring was under the special tutelage of the god. The very name *yrḥbwl* may describe the relationship of the god to the spring (*Pagan God*, p. 111). Indeed it was Yarhibol's role as protector of the spring of Efca that made him known at Palmyra and in the Palmyrene. But Yarhibol's function in the life of the city was very likely hampered by the creation of the triad of Bel in which his position became by constraint that of an acolyte of Bel (see pp. 2 and 9-11). Furthermore, the increasing popularity of Baal Shamin, a supreme god of agricultural life, must have stirred some ancient religious traditions. The arrival at Palmyra of the western cult of Baal Shamin may have encountered opposition among those tribes whose Amorite or Aramaean origin had given them a cultural background different from that of the newcomer's worshipers. The name Yarhibol, the ancestral character of his cult, and the leading role that the god played in the affairs of the city indicate that this true *Baal* of the spring of Efca had been worshiped in the area since the moment settled life started.

In an inscription of A.D. 128 a certain Atteʿaqab son of Hairan paid for an altar dedicated by the deities Bel Ḥamon and Manawat to "the one whose name is blessed for ever"; the altar was erected at the spring of Efca (*Inv.* XII, 43). If the anonymous god meant here was Baal Shamin, it remains to be explained why the monument was offered at the spring and not in the area consecrated to Baal Shamin in the center of the city (*Pagan God,* p. 127). This reasoning also holds should the anonymous god of the inscriptions be equated to Bel. It would have been improper for Bel Ḥamon and Manawat to dedicate their altar to Bel in the vicinity of the spring, a domain considered to be under Yarhibol's protection. The interpretation of the inscription of 128 becomes coherent only if the god "whose name is blessed for ever" is Yarhibol himself. Gods dedicated altars and temples to one another (Milik, *Dédicaces,* pp. ix-x). Bel Ḥamon and Manawat have therefore extended their divine courtesy to Yarhibol, whose temple at the spring neighbored their own temple on top of the Jebel Muntar. Bel Ḥamon was an avatar of Bel (*Pagan God,* pp. 127-128), and as such his dedication to Yarhibol at the spring becomes a meaningful gesture. The anonymity behind which Yarhibol hides is not surprising. In the bilingual inscription quoted above, the divine name is not mentioned. This text may be of the third century A.D., but another bilingual inscription from the Agora, dated in 193, also seems to skip Yarhibol's name in the Palmyrene section (*Inv.* X, 85).

The formula "the one whose name is blessed for ever" is most probably cultic, and loose enough to be used on different liturgical occasions. Originally, it could have designated Yarhibol once his cult lost its prominent status in the city as a result of the preeminence that the cult of Bel acquired with the dedication of the new temple in A.D. 32. The formula, however, may have helped the faithful to address themselves to other gods, especially Bel and Baal Shamin, and this would explain the presence of so many altars dedicated to the anonymous god in the city.

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NOTES ON THE PLATES

The abbreviation P precedes the designation of the owner of the photographic rights.

Frontispiece

Stele of Ashar and Saad. About 200. 45 by 46 cm. National Museum of Damascus. P: Yale University Art Gallery.

Plate I

Tudmor and its oasis; aerial view to the northwest in March, 1933. In the center is the imposing temenos of the temple of Bel. In the background, the Turkish castle and, beyond, the stone quarry of the region. P: J. Starcky.

The Greco-Roman name of the city was Palmyra. The modern name derives from the old form *Tadmor* present in the cuneiform texts. The area developed as an important trade center under the Seleucids and the Romans. After 272 and 273, when the Emperor Aurelianus chastised Palmyra's insubordination, the city began to decline. The oasis is linked economically to the main Syrian areas: the Plain of Hauran, Damascus, Homs, Hama, Aleppo, and the towns of Deir ez-Zor and Hit on the Euphrates River.

Plate II

1. The temple of Bel at Palmyra; view to the southwest. P: J. Starcky.
2. The Grand Colonnade; view to the southwest. P: J. Starcky.

Plate III

1. Cella of the temple of Bel at Palmyra with its portal facing west. The building stands on a podium that was made when the ground level was lowered by the construction of the vast temenos in the third quarter of the first century A.D. (Starcky, *Palmyre*, pp. 111-112). P: J. Teixidor.
2. Bas-relief of Bel with Yarhibol (right) and Aglibol (left); to the extreme right, Arṣu without a halo. From the temple of

Bel at Palmyra. First century A.D. Museum of Palmyra. P: J. Starcky.

For another representation of the triad of Bel with Arṣu, see Plate XXI:2.

Plate IV

1. Northern niche in the cella of the temple of Bel. P: J. Starcky.

For details, see Seyrig, Amy, and Will, *Le temple de Bel à Palmyre,* pp. 41-52, especially pp. 44-45, 50-51, pl. 27: ibid., *Album,* p. 58.

2. Southern niche of the same cella P: J. Starcky.

See Seyrig, Amy, and Will, pp. 53-60, pls. 31-34; ibid., *Album,* pp. 72, 73, 78, 139.

Plate V

1. Entrance to the temple of Bel Ḥamon on top of the Jebel Muntar; view to the west. Façade: 6.75 by 4.05 m. The doorway, 1.44 m wide, is off-center. P: J. Teixidor.

The bases of two columns of the pronaos were found in situ. The cella was reused in medieval times as a Muslim sanctuary. For a brief report on the excavations undertaken in December, 1965, see du Mesnil du Buisson, *CRAI* 1966, pp. 165-169.

2. Two blocks of the temple doorway. P: J. Teixidor.

3. Lintel bearing the dedication of the temple. See *Inv.* XII, 48. P: J. Teixidor.

Plate VI

Stele of Baal Shamin (Zeus Kyrios) from Dura-Europos, now in the Yale University Art Gallery. Dated A.D. 31 or 32. 51 by 34 cm. For a detailed description of the monument, see *Rep.*, VII-VIII, pp. 292-30. P: Yale University Art Gallery.

The seated god grasps a scepter with his left hand and holds a cluster of fruit with the right. He is portrayed as the Lord of crops and sheep. The standing figure is represented in the act of offering a lamb to the god; cf. Collart, *Architecture,* pp. 210-211. In the top margin of the cult relief, above the worshiper, is incised: Σέλευκος Λευκίου; above the head of the god: Ζεύς. At the base of the relief there is a bilingual inscription.

At the right:

1. Σέλευκος Λευκίου ἐδώρεσ-
2. α τό(ν) ἀνδριάντα τῷ Δεῖ κυρ-
3. ίῷ καί Αβαβουις ὑιὸς αὐτοῦ
4. ἔτους γμτ′ μηνὸς ’Απελλ-
5. αίου. Μνησθῇ ’Ιαραιος . . .

At the left:

1. byr[ḥ] tšry šnt 343
2. mṣb’ dnh nṣb b[r]‘th br
3. lyqy w’bbwhy brh
4. lb‘[l]šmyn ’lh’

(*Inv. D-E* 23;
Rep., VII-VIII, pp. 307, 309, no. 915a.)

(*Greek.*) Seleucus son of Lucius, with his son Ababouis, has offered the relief to Zeus Kyrios. Year 343, month Apellaios. Remembered be Yarhaios....

(*Palmyrene.*) In the month Tishri, year 343 (October, A.D. 31 or 32). Bar‘atteh son of Lucius and his son Abbuhi have offered this stele to Baal Shamin, the god.

Plate VII

1. Cella of the temple of Baal Shamin at Palmyra before the Swiss excavations of 1954-1956; view to the southwest. P: J. Starcky.

For the final report on the excavations, see Collart, *Architecture.*

2. Stele showing, from left to right, Yarhibol, Baal Shamin, Bel, Aglibol, and Astarte. Middle of the second century A.D. 93 by 52 cm. Museum of Palmyra. P: J. Teixidor.

A similar relief, dated in 153, was found in the Wadi ‘Arafa (Jebel el-Abiad); see *Inv.* XII, 55. Its inscription mentions Bel and Baal Shamin together with Astarte, Aglibol, Malakbel, Nemesis, Arṣu, and Abgal.

Plate VIII

Relief of Baal Shamin standing between two acolytes, the Moon god and the Sun god. First half of the first century A.D. Limestone, 69 by 56 cm. The Louvre Museum. P: J. Starcky.

The monument represents the logical unfolding of the concept of the Lord of Heaven, i.e. the Lord of the firmament to which the sun and the moon belong (*Pagan God*, pp. 141-142). Seyrig described the relief in *Syria* 26 (1949) 28-32. The inscriptions on it are short prayers that can be dated in the second century; see Starcky, ibid., pp. 35-40.

Plate IX

Dura-Europos; aerial view to the north. P: Yale University Art Gallery.

Plate X

Relief of Yarhibol from Dura -Europos. First century A.D. 22-25 by 54 cm. See *Rep.*, VII-VIII, pp. 264-265, 279-281, no. 909. Yale University Art Gallery. P: Ibid.

The inscription reads:

1. yrḥbwl ’lh’
2. ṭb’ mṣb’ dy
3. ‘yn’ ‘bd bny
4. myt’ qšṭ’

(*Inv. D-E* 33.)

(Relief of) Yarhibol, the good god, the idol of the spring, which the Bene Mitha, the archers, erected.

Plate XI

Relief of Mithras from Dura-Europos. Dated in March, 169. 57 by 42 cm. See *Rep.*, VII-VIII, pp. 92-94. Yale University Art Gallery. P: Ibid.

The monument bears two inscriptions: one, in Palmyrene, is on the base of the relief inside a *tabella ansata*; the other, in Greek, is on the face of the left side of the molding (*Rep.*, ibid., p. 83). The Greek text reads: ΕΘΦΑΝΕΙ ΙΣΤΑΡΤΗΓΑ. The Palmyrene text runs as follows:

1. dkrn ṭb ‘bd ’tpny ’sṭrtg’
2. br zbd‘h dy ‘l qšṭ’ dy bdwr’
3. byrḥ ’dr šnt 480

A good memorial erected by Etpani the strategos, son of Zabdeʿa, who is in command of the archers who are in Dura. In the month Adar, year 480 (March, 169).

Plate XII

1. The backwater of the spring of Efca. The flight of steps has been hewn in the rock. P: J. Teixidor.

2. The cave of the spring. For a detailed description of the site, see Starcky, *AAS* 7 (1957) 115-116. P: J. Teixidor.

Plate XIII

1. Beam relief in the temple of Bel at Palmyra, showing Aglibol and Malakbel (only the right leg and arm of the latter are preserved) shaking hands over an altar heaped with fruits. H. c. 1.60 m. About A.D. 32. P: J. Teixidor.

2. Bas-relief of Aglibol and Malakbel. From Khirbet Ramadan. Second century A.D. 29 by 24 cm. National Museum of Damascus. P: J. Starcky.

The Palmyrene inscription is badly damaged, but it can be read as follows: *qrb ʾwṭkʾ lʿglbwl w*[*lm*]*lkbl*, "[This] Eutyches offered to Aglibol and Malakbel."

Plate XIV

1. Stele of the priest Sin-zer-ibni in the act of prayer. Early seventh century B.C. 93 by 35 cm. The Louvre Museum. P: Ibid.

The monument was found in 1891 at Nerab, 7 km southeast of Aleppo.

2. Stele of Siʾ-gabbari, priest of the Moon god; a companion piece to the preceding stele. Early seventh century B.C. 95 by 45 cm. The Louvre Museum. P: Ibid.

The stele represents a funerary scene, with the priest seated in front of a table bearing food. His servant stands holding a fan.

Plate XV-XVI:1

Altar dedicated to Malakbel and the Palmyrene gods in Rome in the middle of the third century A.D. Each side: 54 (maximum h.) by 23 cm. Capitoline Museum, Rome. P: Ibid.

Plate XVI:2 shows Saturn as a *senex* carrying a billhook or *harpê*. This tool is the emblem of Saturn (Kronos). In the western Mediterranean it may have recalled the instrument with which the god mutilated his father or the sickle (*falx*) for pruning vines. In the ancient Near East the *harpê* was a symbol of power; see Leglay, *Saturne africain*, pp. 142-146. The African Saturn (or the Punic Baal Ḥamon of the inscriptions) was of course different from the Roman Saturn, as Leglay has noted; see also Frend, *The Donatist Church*, pp. 78-83. The cultural significance of the representation of Saturn on the altar of Malakbel is difficult to ascertain. Cumont, who studied the monument in *Syria* 9 (1928) 101-109, thought this association to be the result of the astrological doctrines of Babylon according to which Saturn was the sun of the night (ibid., pp. 103-104).

Plate XVII

Plan of the cella of the temple of Allat. P: H. J. W. Drijvers.

For the location of the temple in Palmyra and the report on the archaeological excavations undertaken there, see Drijvers, *Antike Welt* 7 (1976) 29-38. A good photograph of the columns of the propylea is in Drijvers, ibid., p. 30, fig. 3.

Plate XVIII

Relief of a seated Palmyrene goddess. 90 by 68 cm. National Museum of Damascus. P: H. J. W. Drijvers.

The monument has been studied by Bounni, *AAS* 15 (1965) 87-98. The inscription is incomplete. The name of the goddess is not preserved, but she is styled [*’š*]*tr’ ṭbt’*, "the good goddess," an epithet that can correspond only to Astarte/Allat. For the theological interpretation of the monument, see p. 97.

Plate XIX

1. Inscribed block found in the temenos of the temple of Bel at Palmyra. 36 by 17 cm. P: J.-M. Dentzer.

See Cantineau, *Syria* 12 (1931) 132-133. For the present reading, see *Inv.* XI, p. 53, and Milik, *Dédicaces*, p. 219.

2. Altar frontal 51 cm high from Hatra. See Teixidor, *Sumer* 21 (1965) 88. Baghad Museum. P: J. Teixidor.

The *semeion*, or standard, depicted here was often represented on the monuments of the city.

Plate XX

1. Relief of Hadad and Atargatis from Dura-Europos. Third century A.D. 41 by 28 cm. See *Rep.*, III, pp. 100-107. Yale University Art Gallery. P: Ibid.

Between the two deities stands the *semeion* mentioned by Lucian in his description of the cults of Hierapolis (*De dea syria* 33). See Seyrig, *Syria* 37 (1960) 238-247 and ibid., 49 (1972) 107-108.

2. Relief of Allat seated between two lions. From Khirbet esh-Shana. Third century A.D. 57 by 50 cm. National Museum of Damascus. P: J. Starcky.

Plate XXI

1. Relief of Arṣu and Azizu. Dated 213. 50 by 55 cm. Museum of Aleppo. P: J. Starcky.

2. Relief dedicated to Bel, Yarhibol, Aglibol, and Arṣu. From the temple of Bel at Palmyra. End of the first century A.D. 47 by 55 cm. See *Inv.* XII, 56. Museum of Palmyra. P: Directorate General of Antiquities, Damascus.

In Plate III:2 Arṣu is represented in company with the triad of Bel on another relief found in the temple of Bel at Palmyra. For the triad of Bel with Arṣu, see du Mesnil du Buisson, *Tessères et monnaies*, p. 173.

Plate XXII

Plan of the temple of Bel (formerly called the temple of the Palmyrene gods) at Dura-Europos. See Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, pp. 29-41. P: Yale University Art Gallery.

Plate XXIII

Isometric plan of the temple of Bel at Dura-Europos showing the frescoes on the southern walls of the pronaos (A), naos (B), and room K as in Plate XXII. See Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, pp. 41-134. P: Yale University Art Gallery.

Plate XXIV

Fresco representing the incense sacrifice of Otes and Yahbshimshos to five Palmyrene gods. From room K, temple of Bel at Dura-Europos. 105 by 352 cm. After Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, pl. LV.

Plate XXV

1. Cult relief of Monimos. Dated in September-October 138. 64 by 42 cm. Private collection. P: J. Starcky.

First published by Starcky in *Semitica* 22 (1972) 57-65, pls. I-II. The monument is dedicated to *Mun'ʿim*, "the good and bountiful genius" by "the community of the village" (*dyrʾ dy qrytʾ*).

2. Bas-relief from Khirbet Farwan. Dated in 191. 37 by 74 cm. National Museum of Damascus. P: J. Starcky.

The inscription commemorates the erection in 191 of a stele representing "the good and bountiful genii of Beth Phaṣiel"; see *PNO*, pp. 67, 156-157, no. 39.

Plate XXVI

1. Stele of Maan and Saad from Ras esh-Shaar. Second century A.D. 39 by 60 cm. See *PNO*, p. 66. National Museum of Damascus. P: J. Starcky.

2. Stele from Khirbet Semrin dedicated to Abgal and Ashar in October, 154. 57-62 by 57 cm. National Museum of Damascus. P: J. Starcky.

Plate XXVII

1. The temple of Abgal at Khirbet Semrin. The structure consists of a large court enclosed by banquet rooms; the cella (4.80 by 5.40 m; see *PNO*, pp. 17-18) is in the northernmost part of the temenos opposite the entrance. The entrance to the walled-in area is from the south (at the left of the photograph). The temple is Greco-Oriental in style, and some similarities between this sacred area and the temples of Dura-Europos are evident; see *PNO*, pp. 14-22, 94-96, fig. 5. After *PNO*, pl. I, 2.

2. Partial view of the western banquet room at the entrance

to the cella of the temple of Abgal. A Palmyrene inscription, dated July, 257, is written on the rim of a krater (h. 49 cm, diam. 56 cm; *PNO*, p. 151, no. 20) in the banquet room. After *PNO*, pl. IV, 2.

Plate XXVIII

Relief of the Gad of Palmyra, dated in 159. 57 by 47 cm. See *Rep.*, VII-VIII, pp. 218-283, especially pp. 260-262. Yale University Art Gallery. P: Ibid.

Plate XXIX

Relief of the Gad of Dura-Europos, dated in 159, a companion piece to the relief reproduced in Plate XXVIII. 62 by 47 cm. See *Rep.*, VII-VIII, pp. 258-260, 277-278, and Frye et al., *YCS* 14 (1955) 144-145, no. 13. Yale University Art Gallery. P. Ibid.

Plate XXX

Fresco VI from the pronaos of the temple of Bel at Dura-Europos. See Plate XXII (A) and Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, pp. 89-114. Yale University art Gallery. P: Ibid.

Plate XXXI

1. Bas-relief from the temple of Bel at Palmyra. About 200. 46 by 50 cm. Museum of Palmyra. P: J. Starcky.

The monument is dedicated "to the Gad of the gardens, to Arṣu, and to Raḥim"; see Starcky, *MUSJ* 38 (1962) 125.

2. Bas-relief of Herakles of the first century B.C. recovered from the foundations of the temple of Bel at Palmyra. 34.5 by 21 cm. National Museum of Damascus. P: J. Starcky.

Plate XXXII

Stele of Sadrafa in the British Museum. Dated in May, A.D. 55. 47 by 32 cm. P: Courtesy of The Trustees of the British Museum.

Plate XXXIII

Cult relief from Dura-Europos representing Aphlad, who, the inscription states, "was known as the gad of the village of ʿAnat on the Euphrates" (see *Rep.*, V, pp. 98-130). An inscribed block found with the Aphlad relief and dated in A.D. 54 (ibid., pp. 113-116, no. 418) can date with certainty both inscriptions and the temple of Aphlad to this year. 51 by 31 cm. Yale University Art Gallery. P: Ibid.

The Greek inscription on the Aphlad relief reads as follows:

1. Τὴν ἀφείδρυσιν
2. ταύτη[ν] ἱεροῦ ᾿Αφλαδ
3. λεγομένου θεοῦ
4. τῆς ῾Αναθ κώμης
5. Εὐφράτου ἀνέθηκεν
6. ῾Αδαδιαβος
7. Ζαβδιβωλου τοῦ
8. Σιλλοι εὐχὴν
9. ὑπὲρ τῆς
10. σωτηρί[ας]
11. αὐτοῦ
12. καὶ τέκνων
13. καὶ τοῦ πά[ν]τος
14. οἴκου

(*Rep.*, v, pp. 112-113, no. 416.)

For the meaning of ἀφίδρυσις, see Robert, *Hellenica* 13 (1965) 124, note. 4. Starcky explains the name of the god in *Syria* 26 (1949) 82.

Plate XXXIV

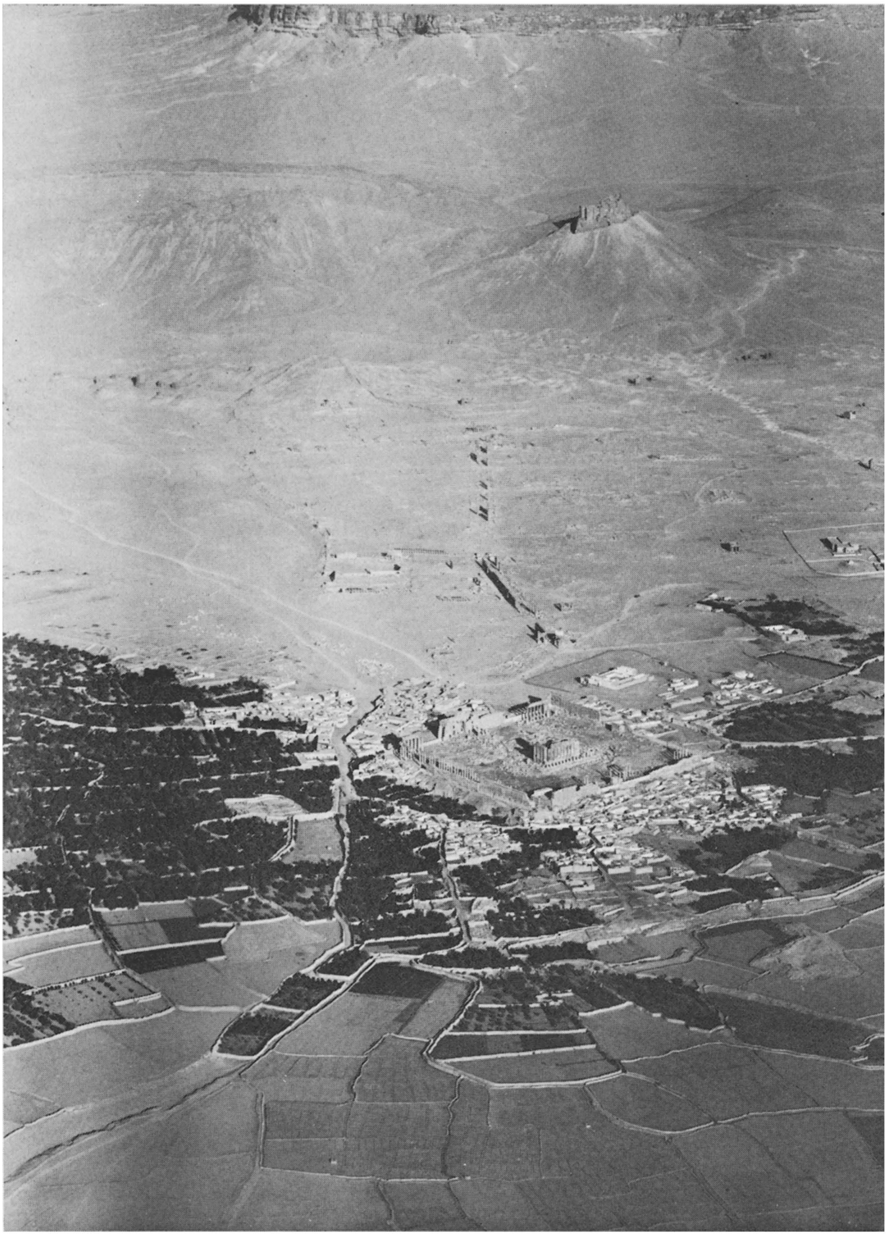
Stele from Amrit (Marathus) found in 1881. H. 1.7 m. The Louvre Museum. P: Ibid.

Harden has rightly noted that all the motifs on the stele "can readily be paralleled in Assyrian art" (*The Phoenicians*, p. 191).

Plate XXXV

Detail from the Phoenician inscription above the lion. P: The Louvre Museum.

PLATES



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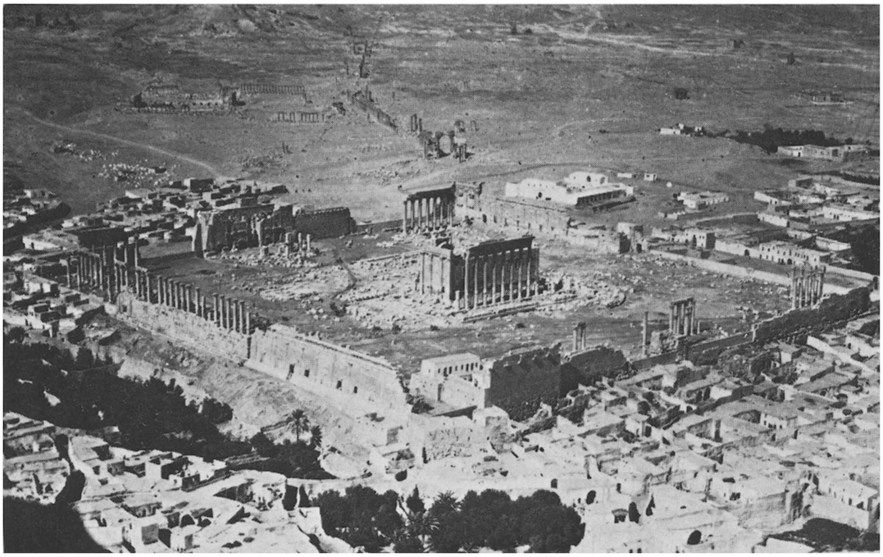

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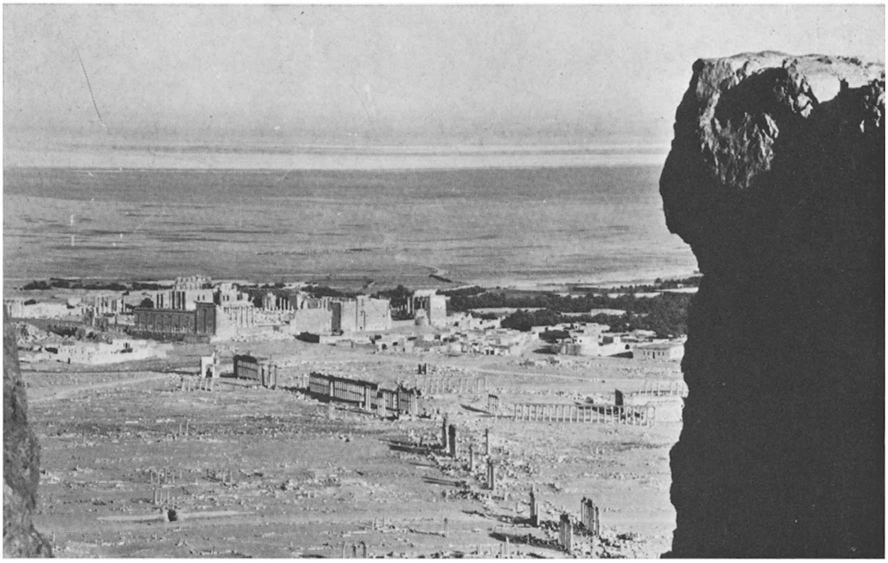

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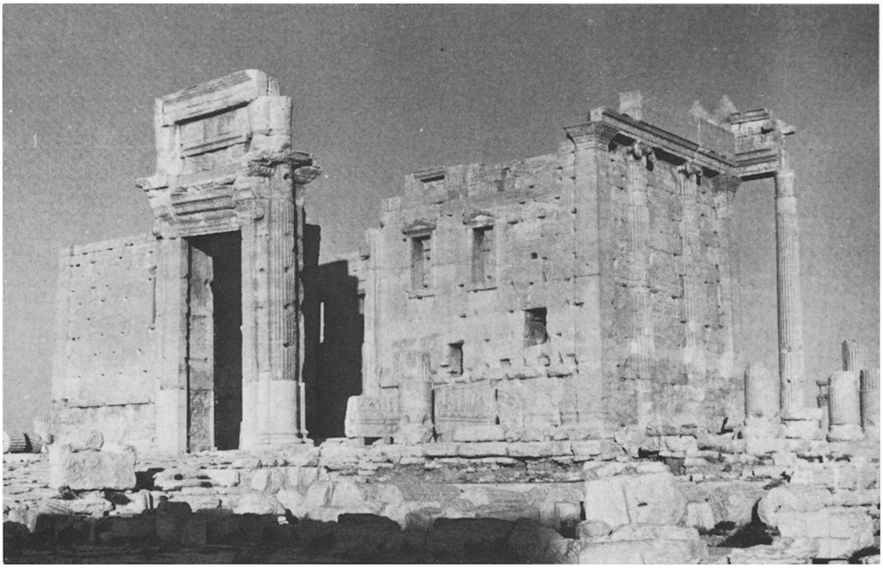

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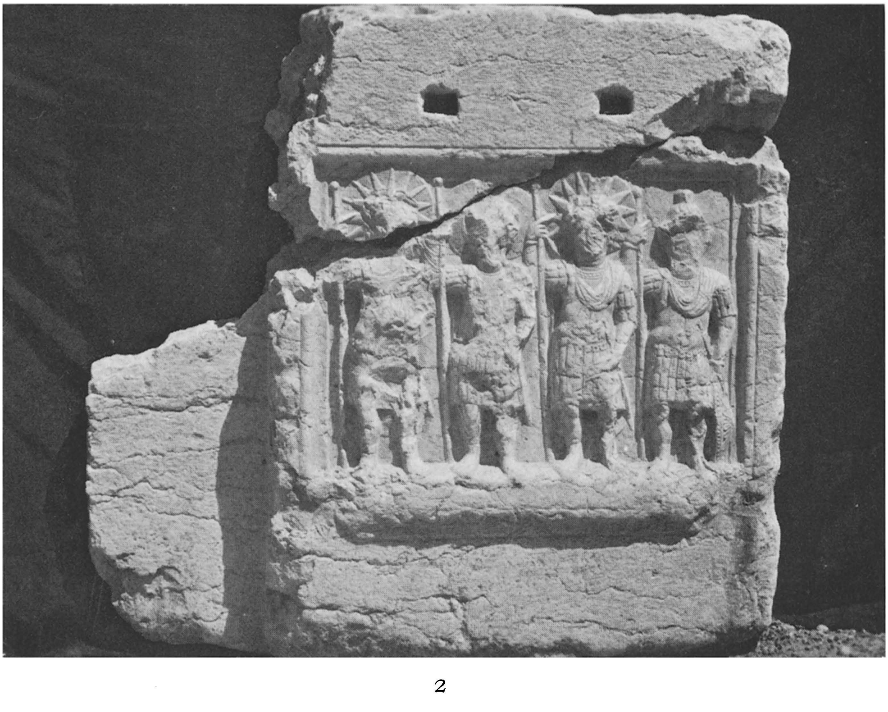

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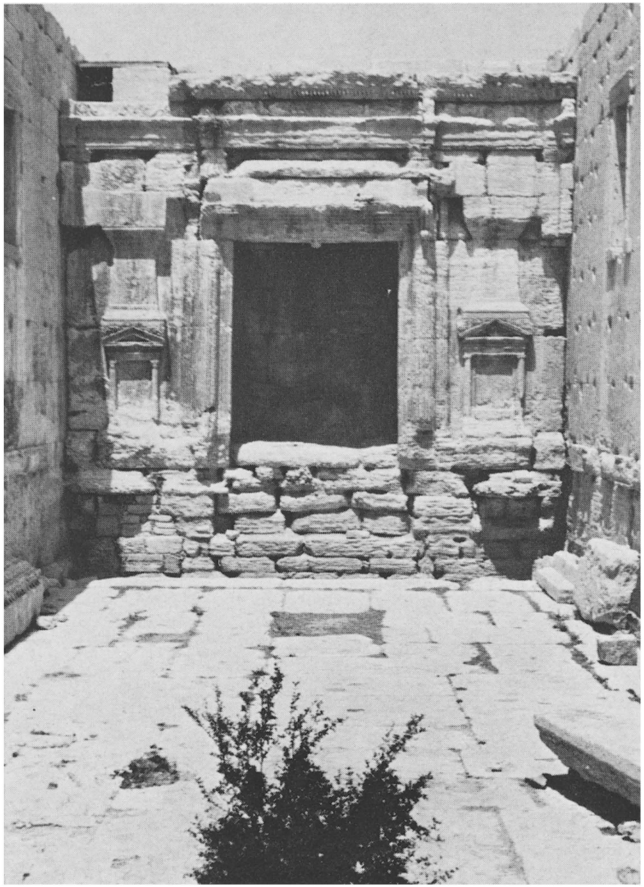

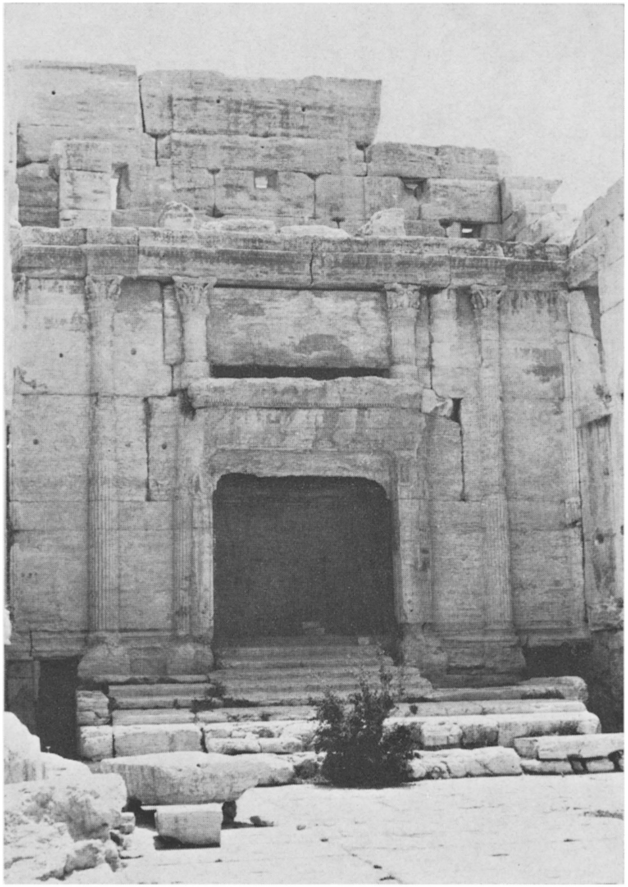

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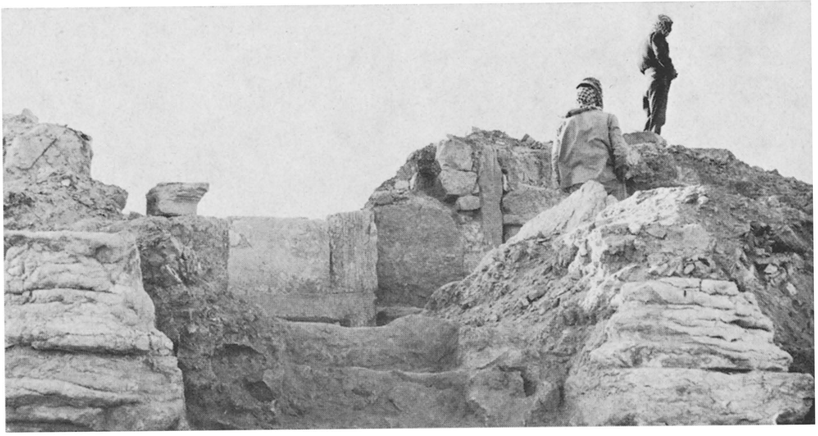

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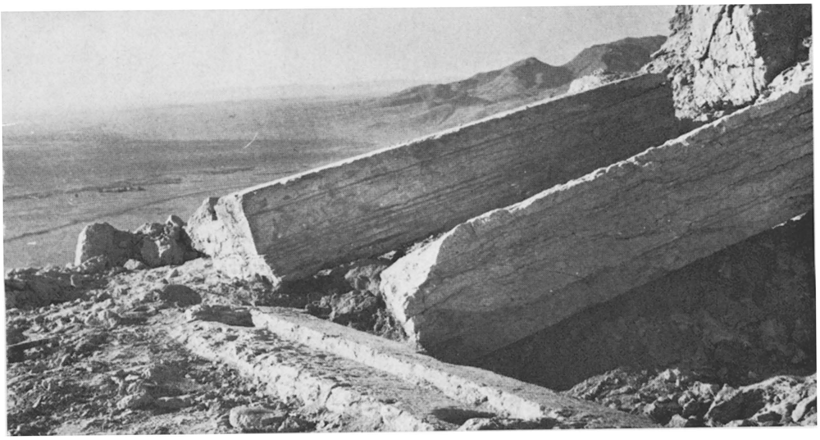

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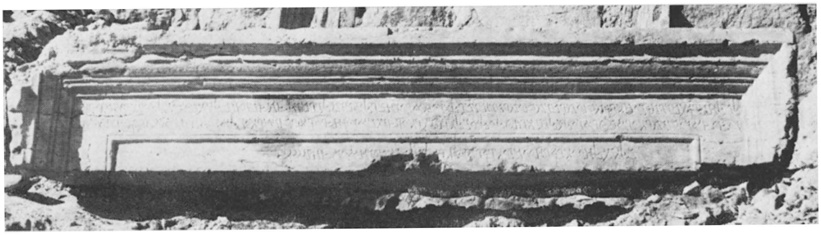

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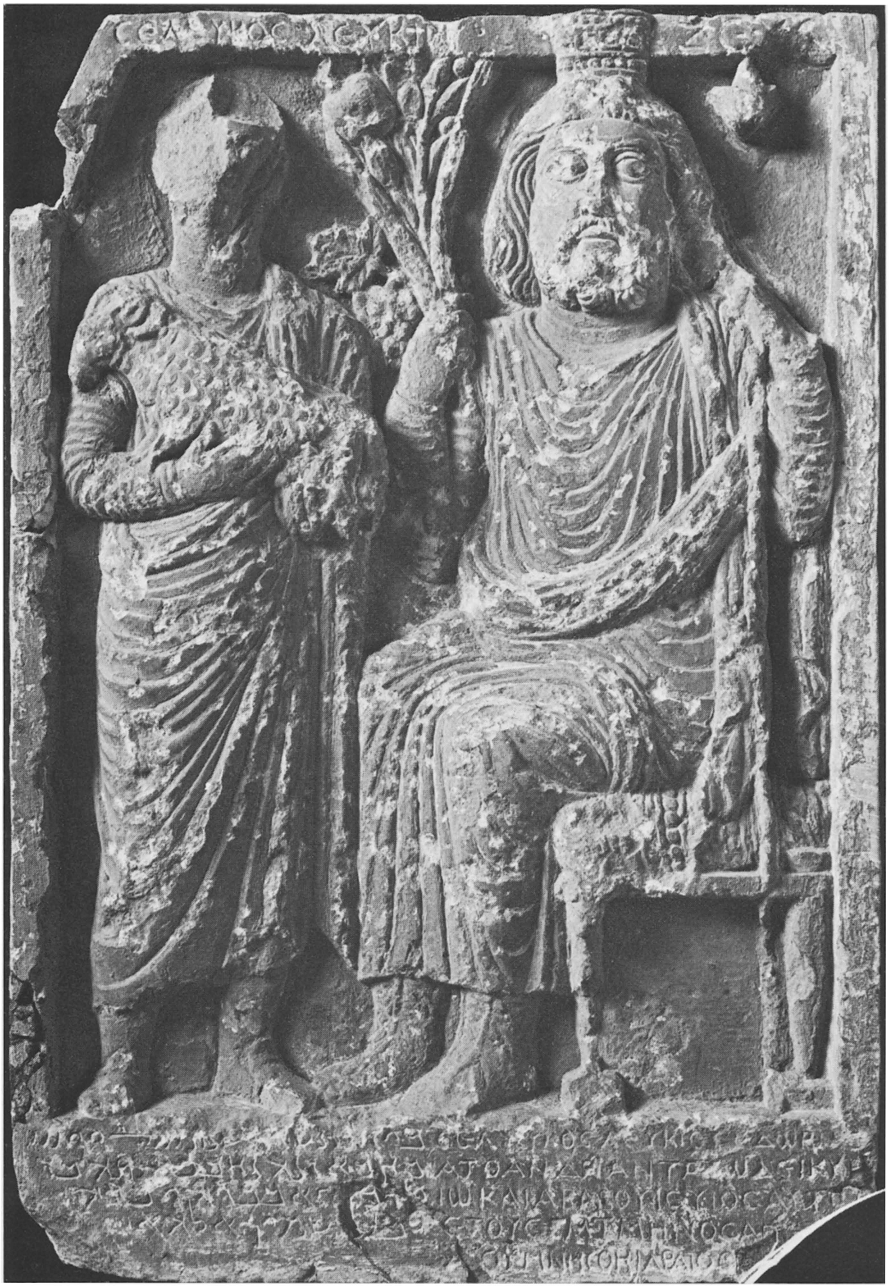

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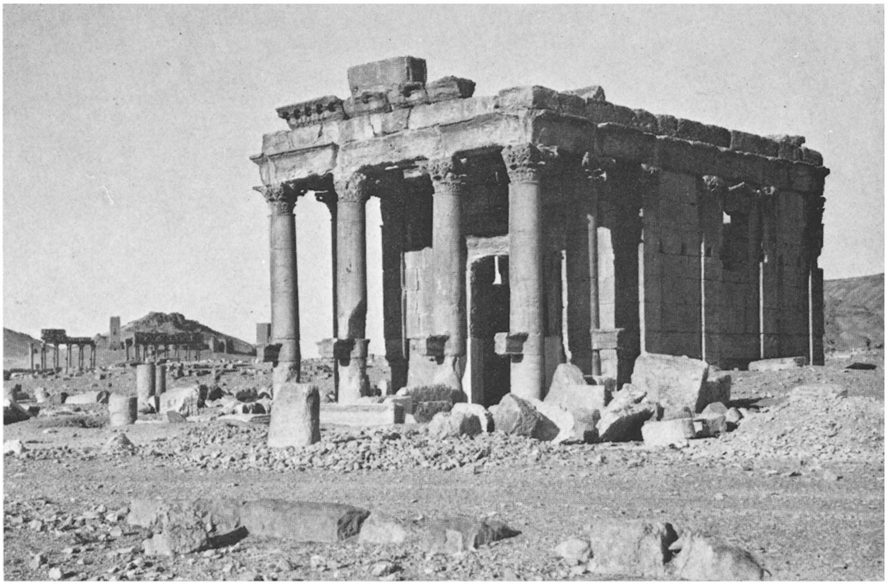

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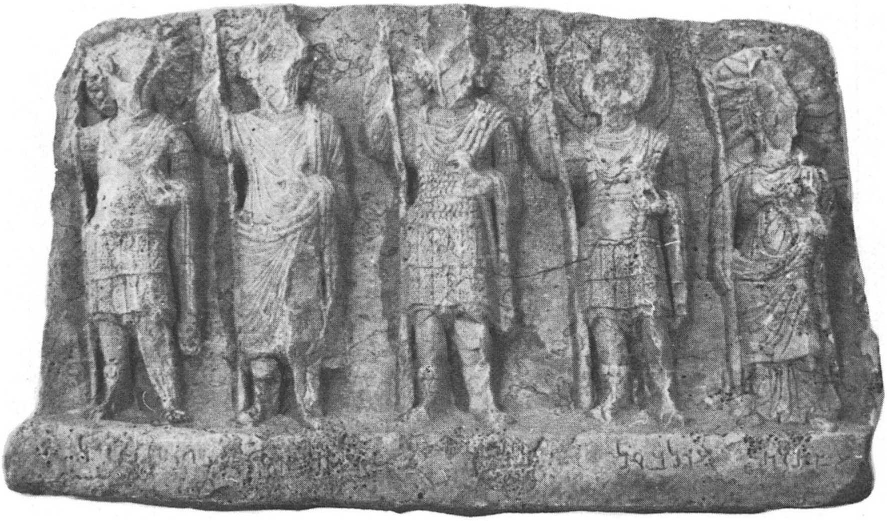

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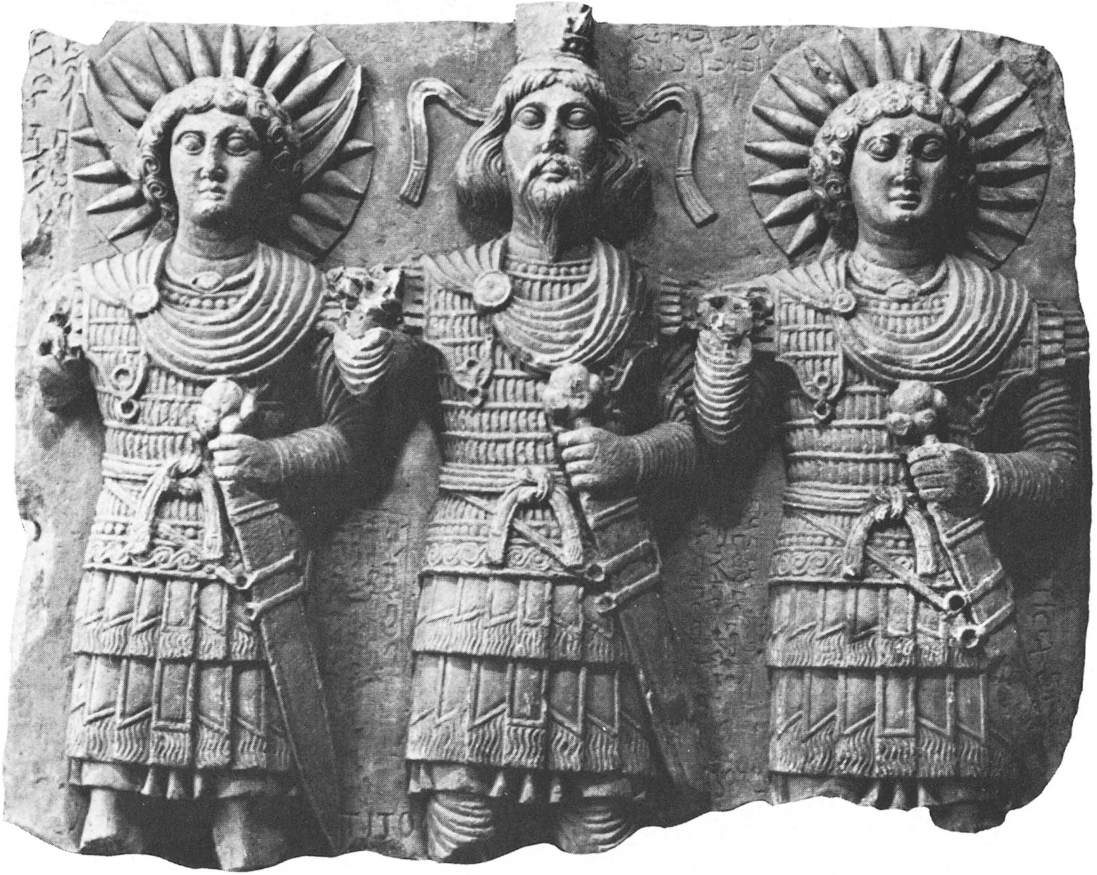

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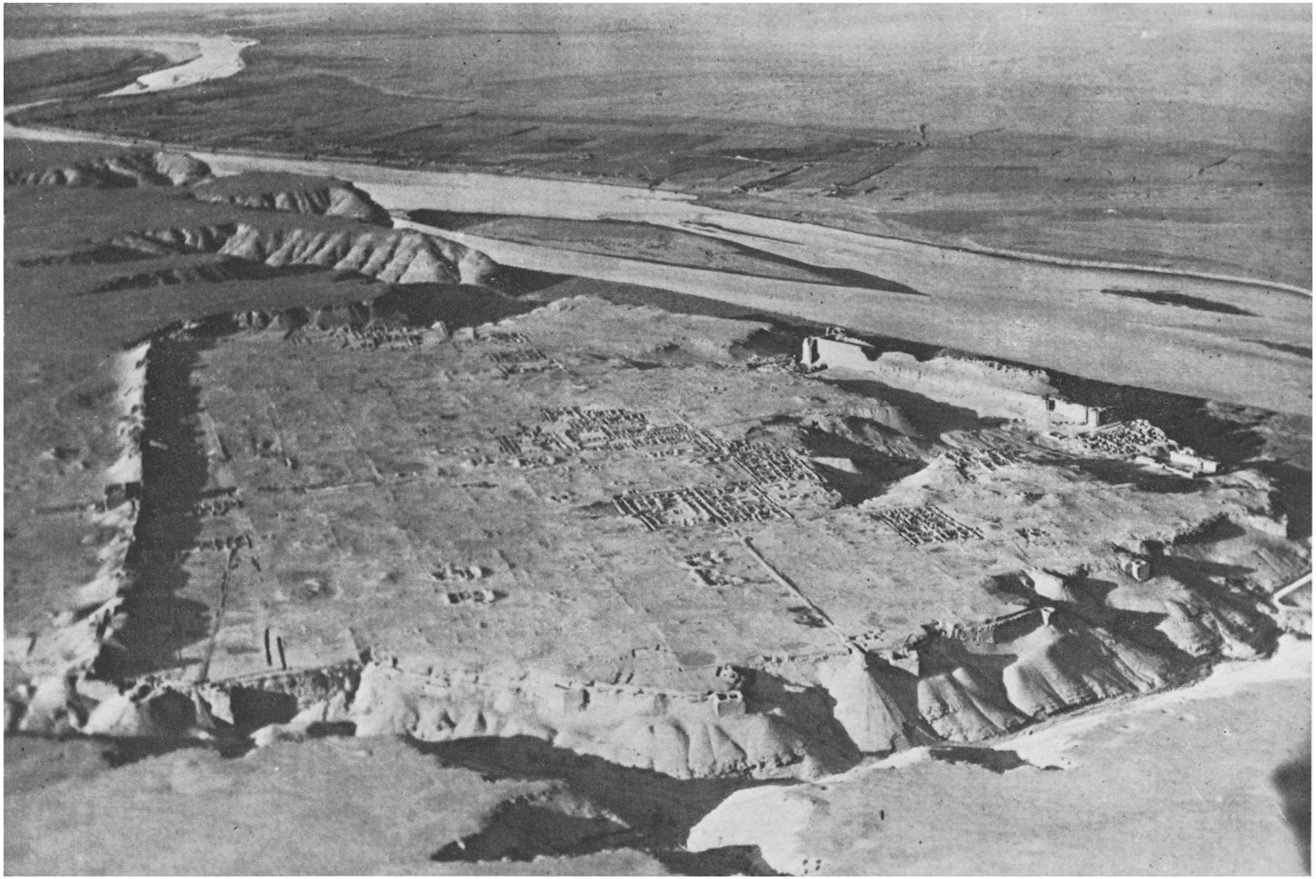

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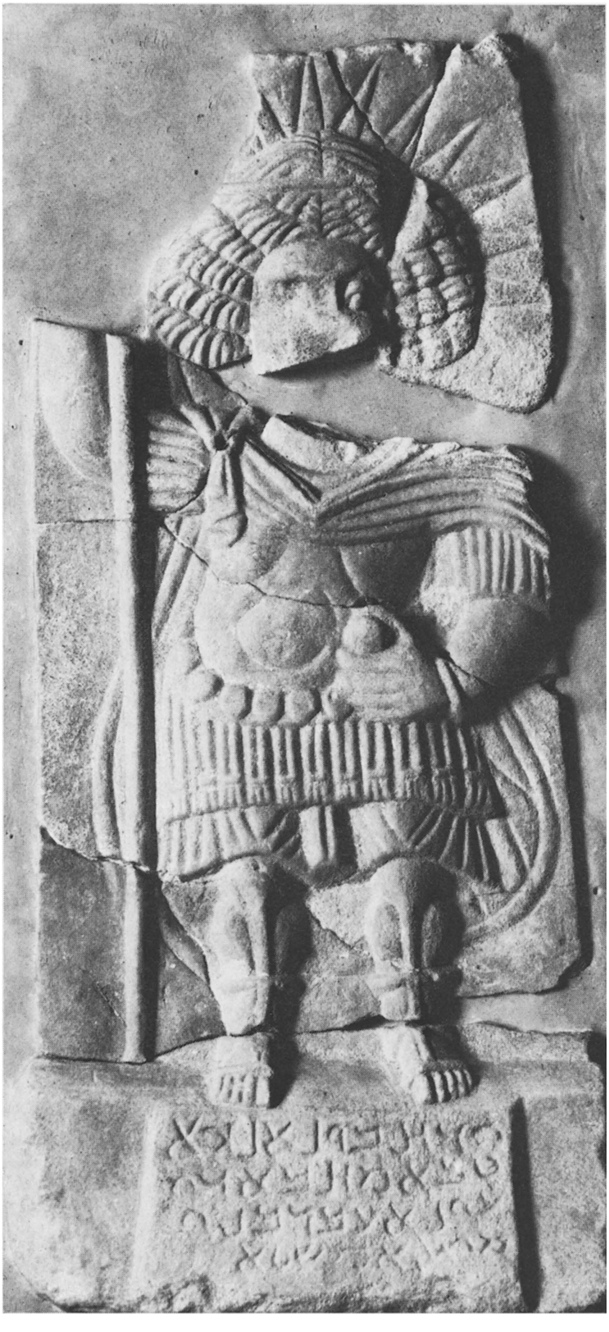

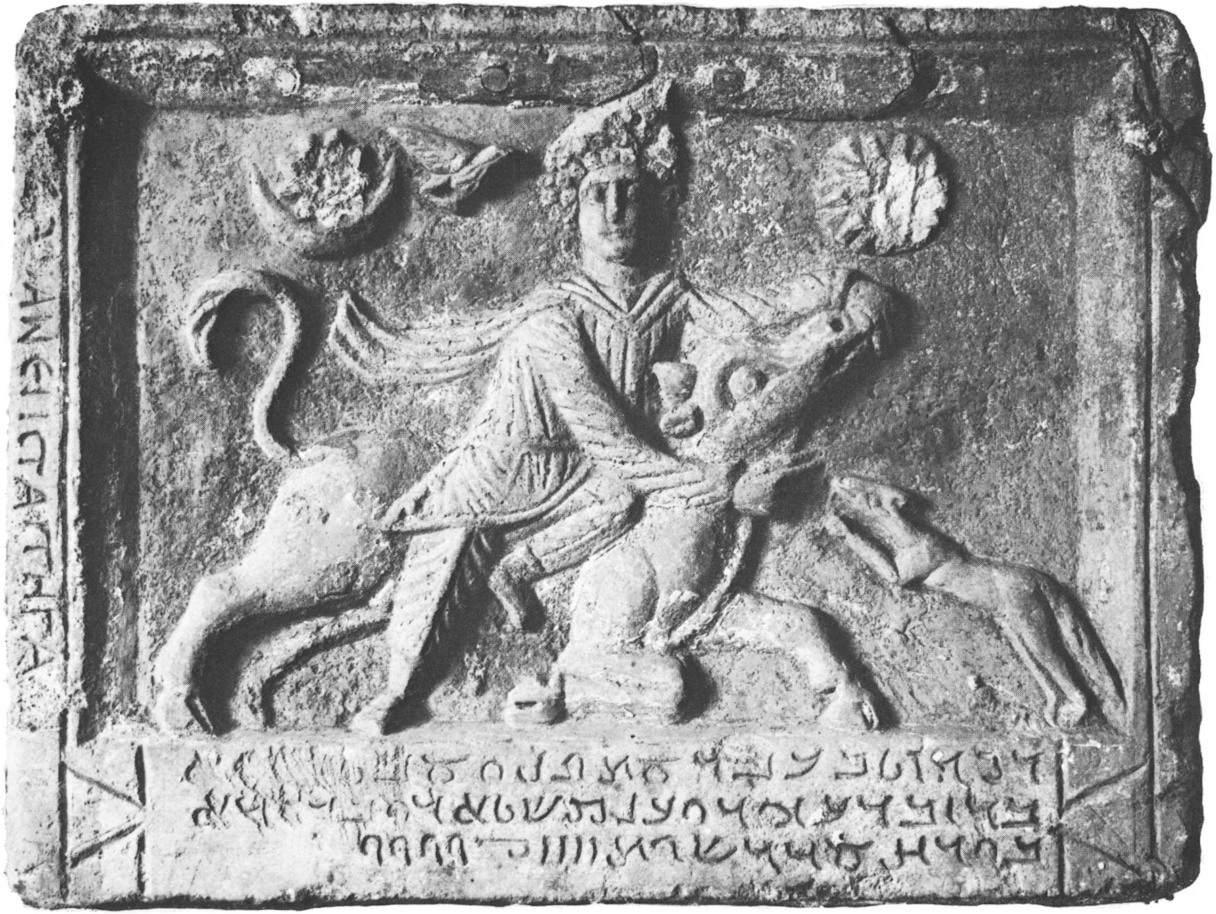
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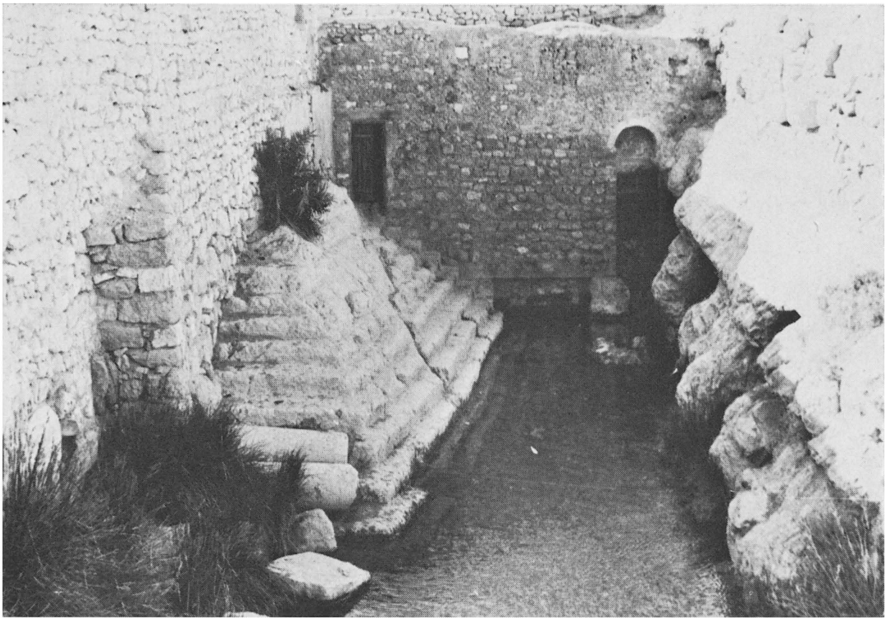

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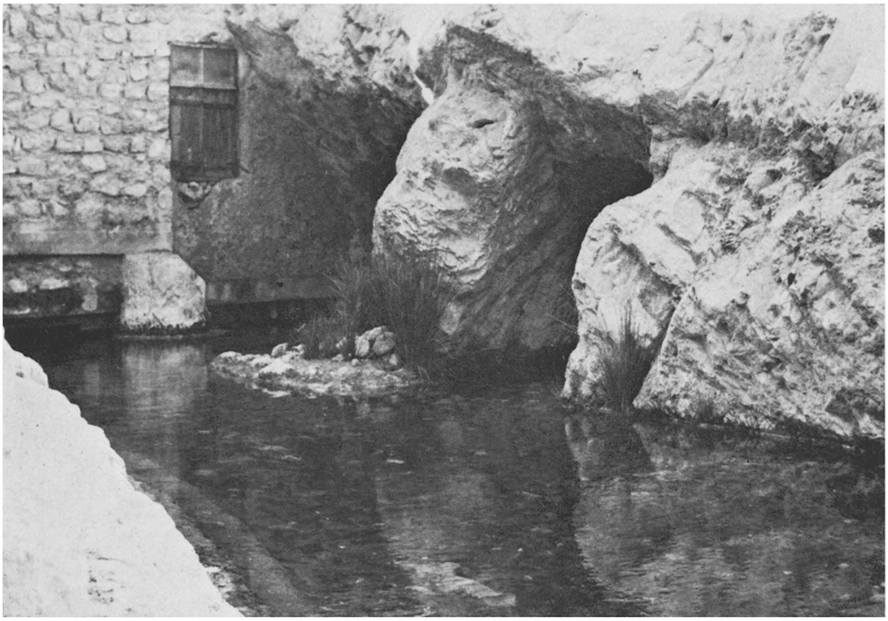

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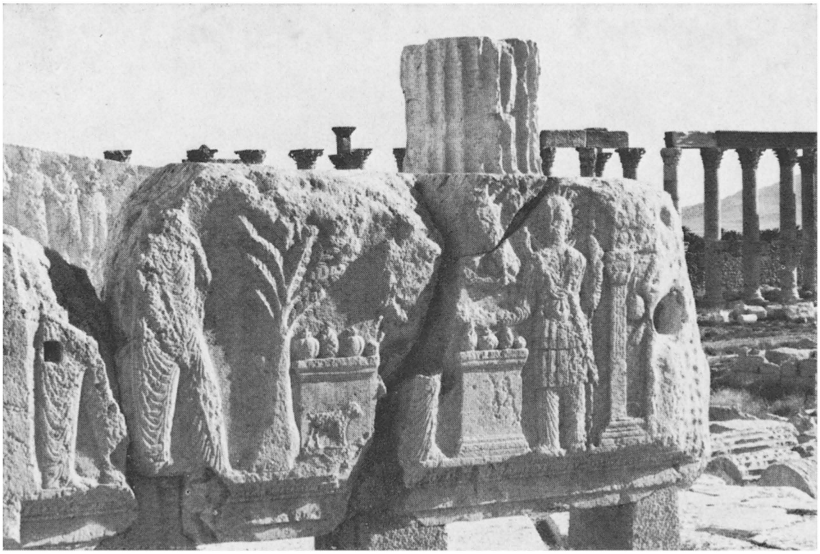

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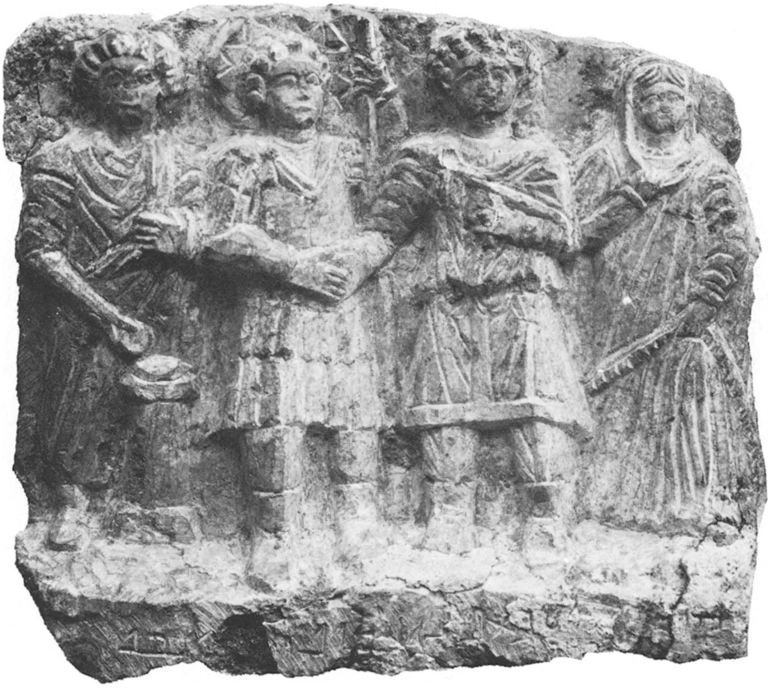

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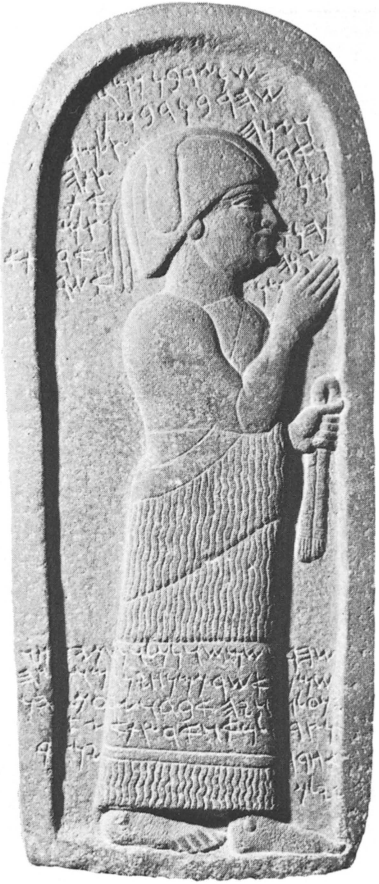

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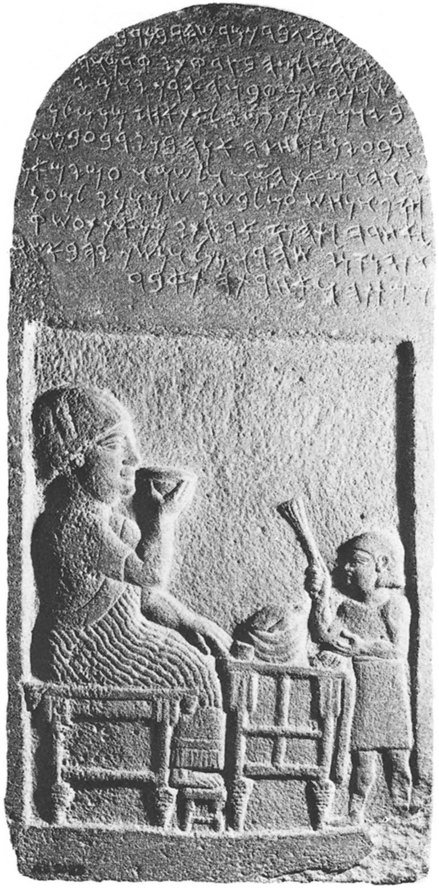

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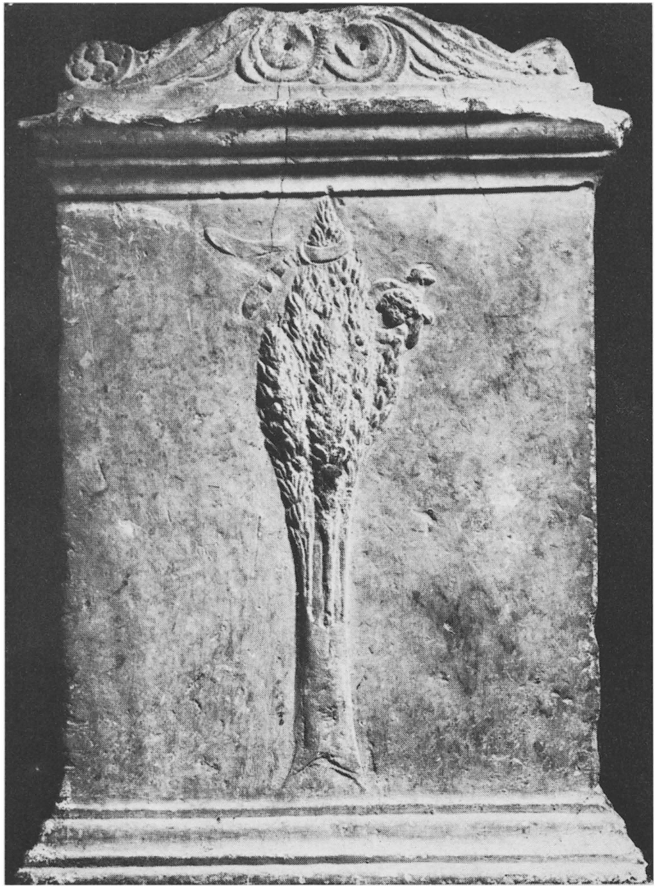
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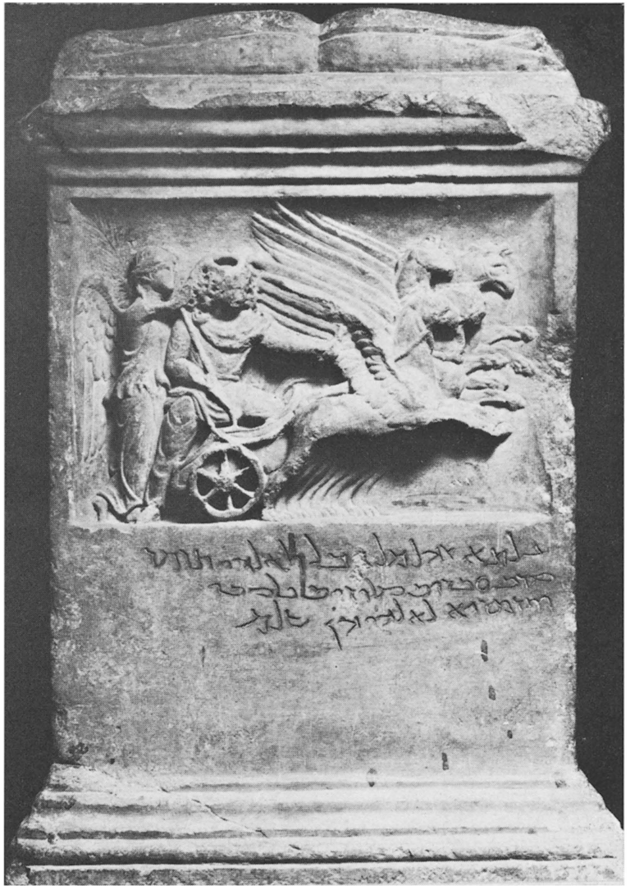
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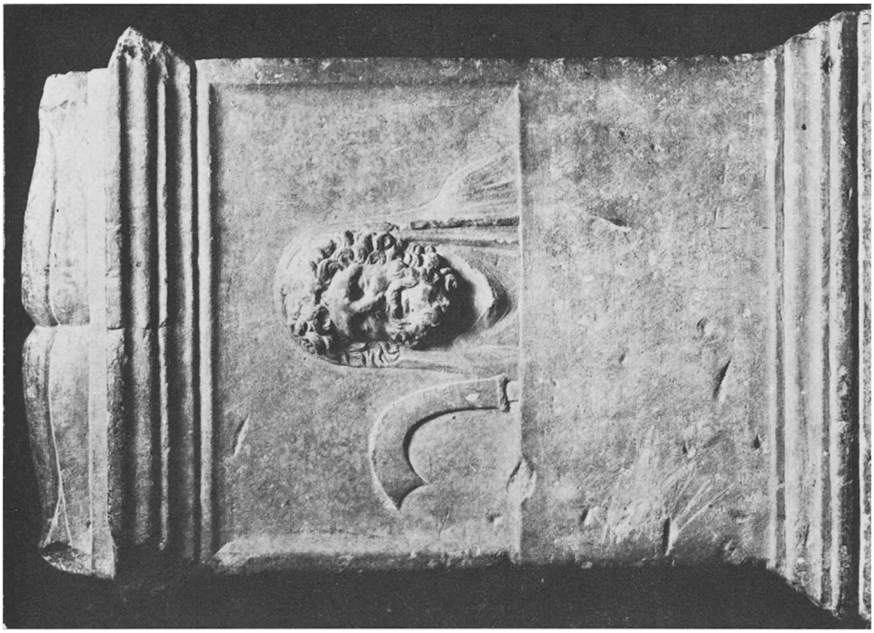

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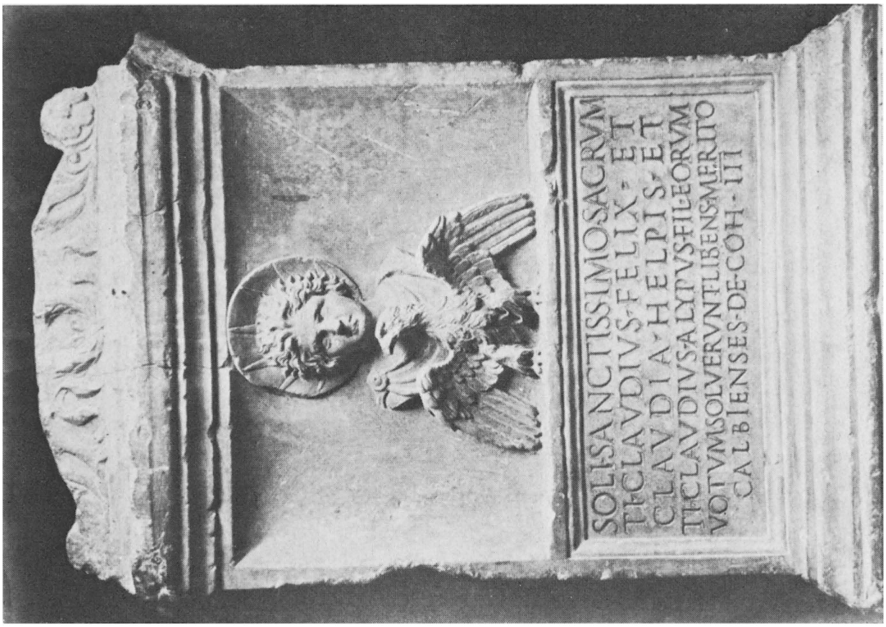
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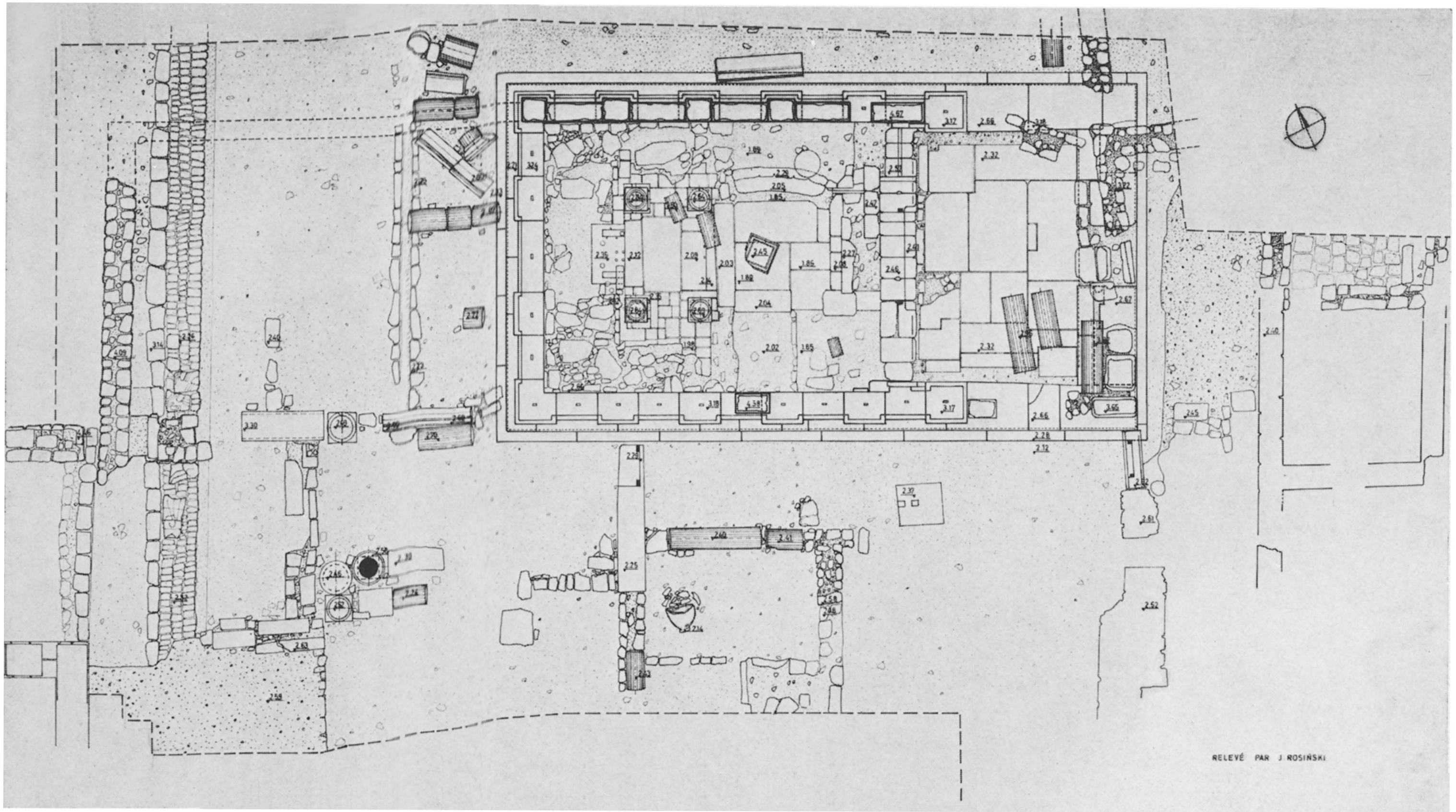
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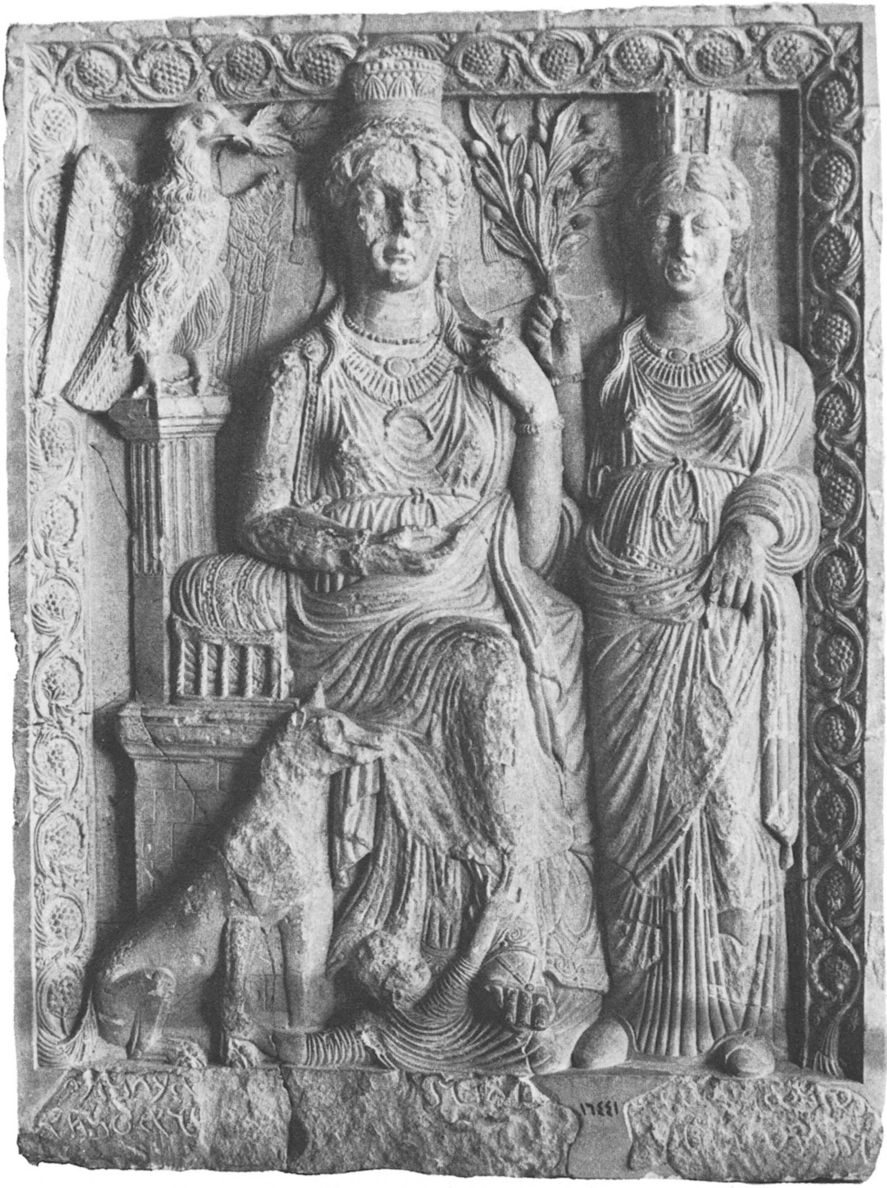

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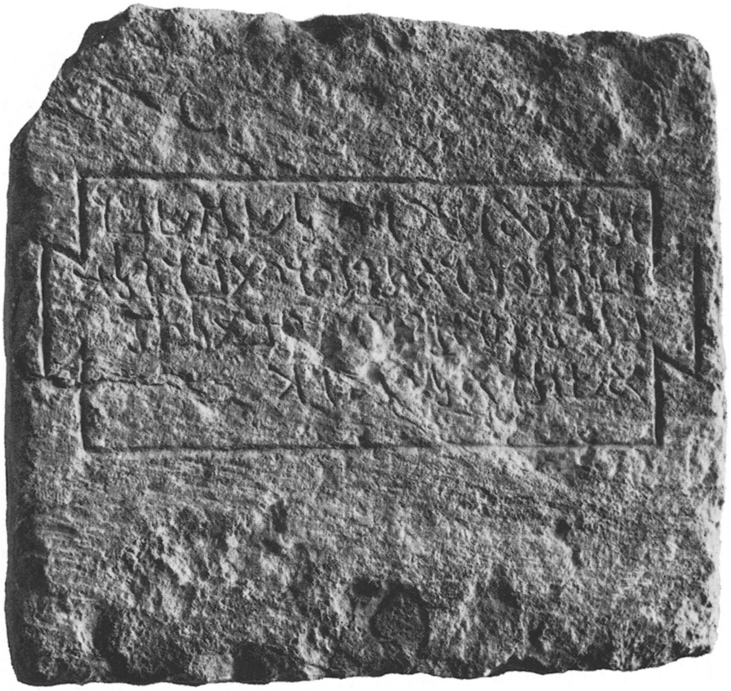

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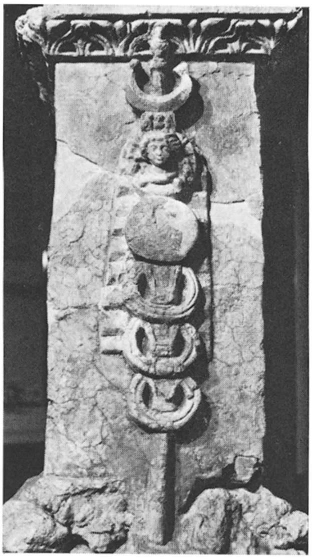

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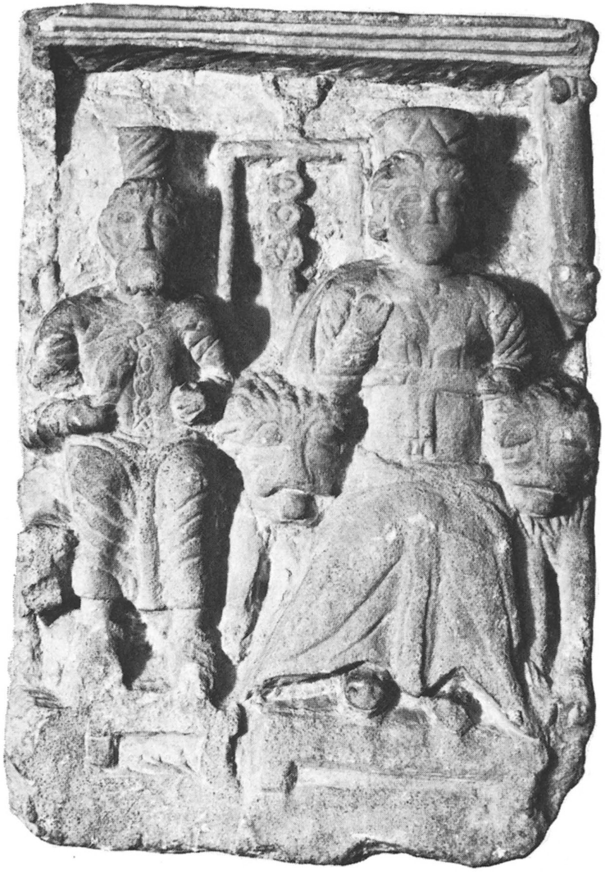

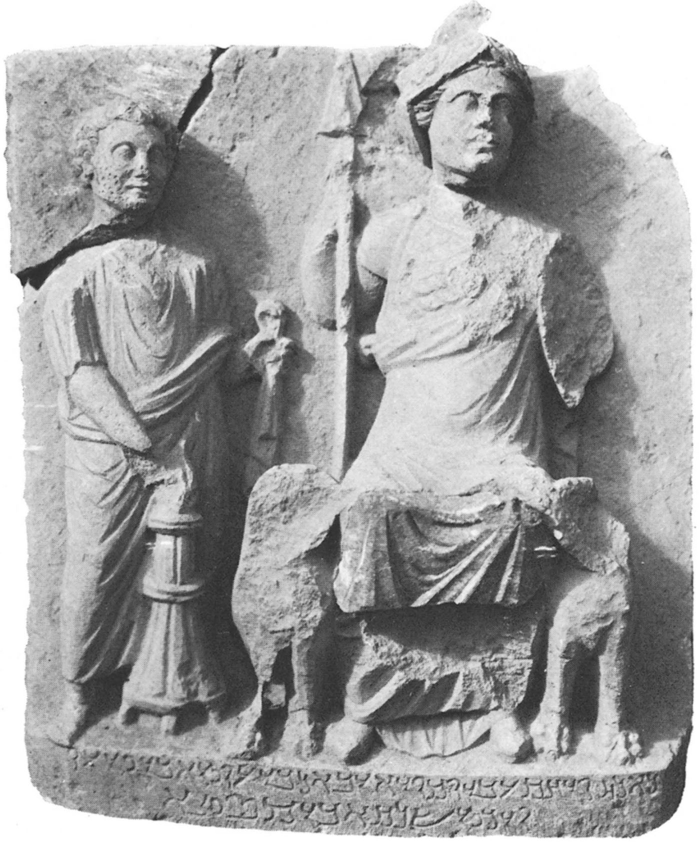

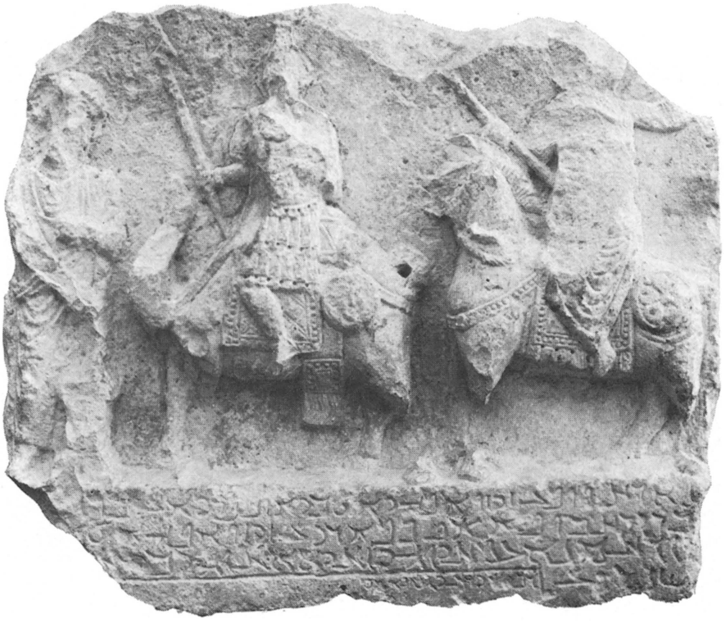

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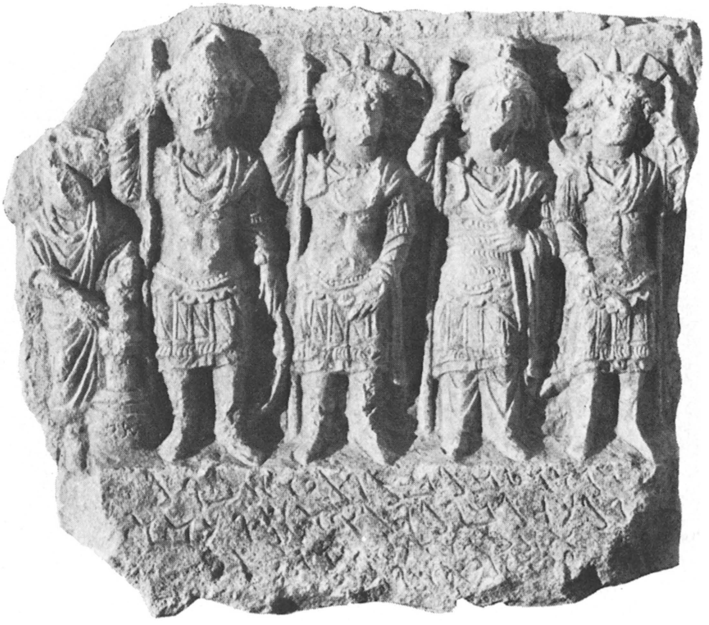

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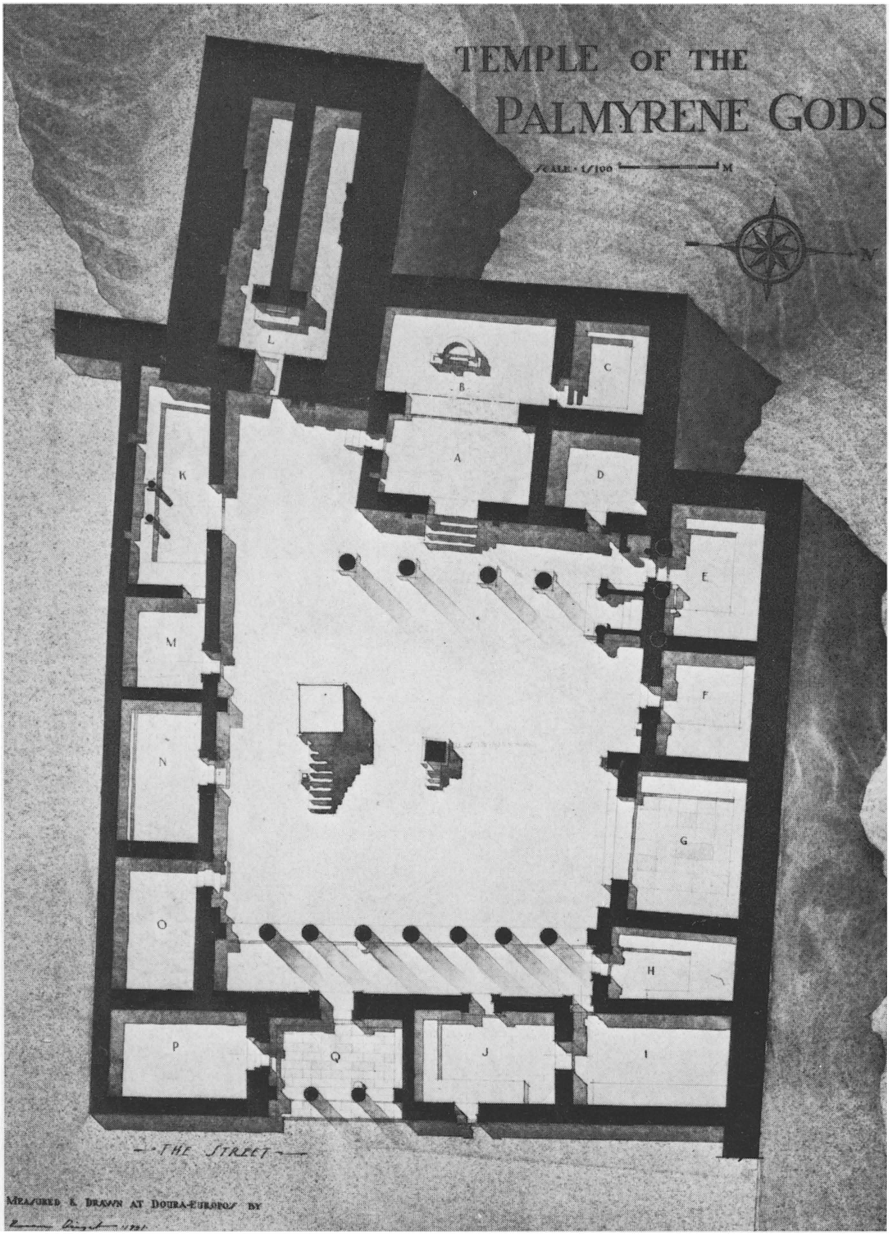
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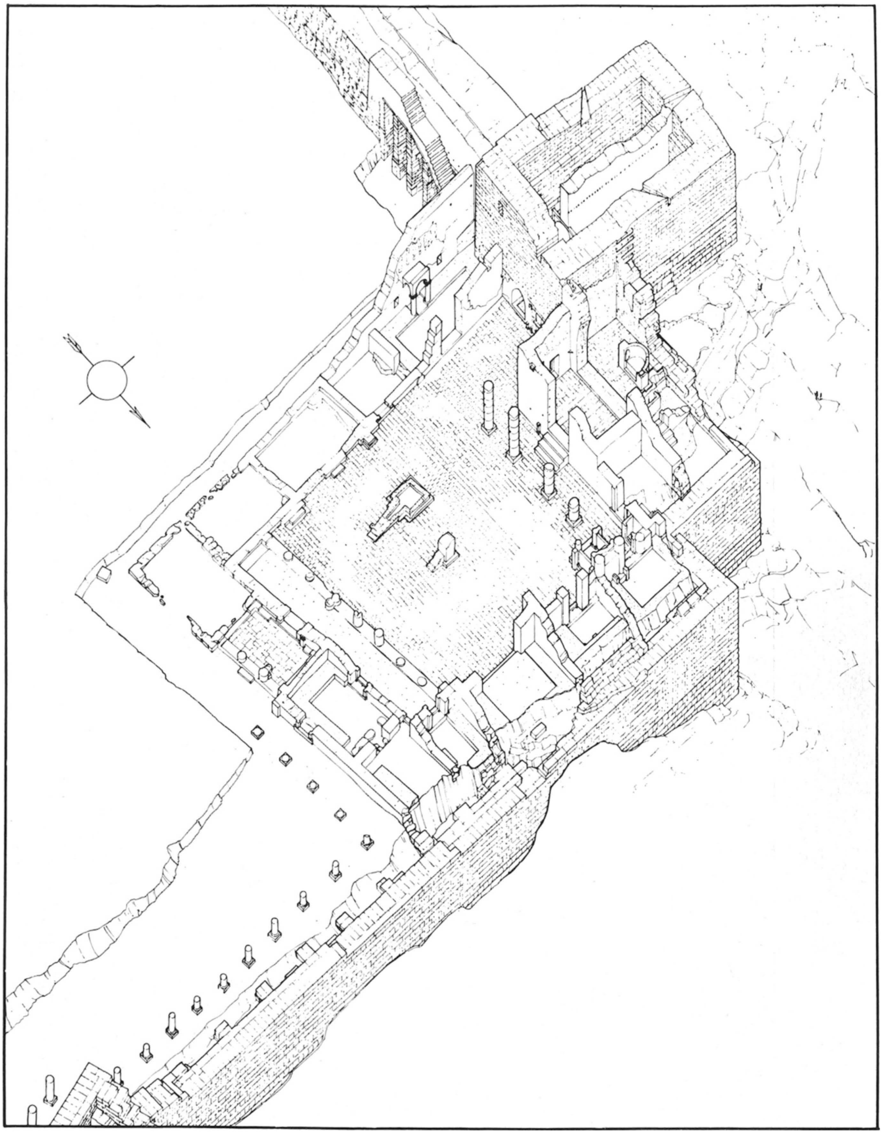
MEASURED & DRAWN AT DOURA-EUROPOS BY
1931



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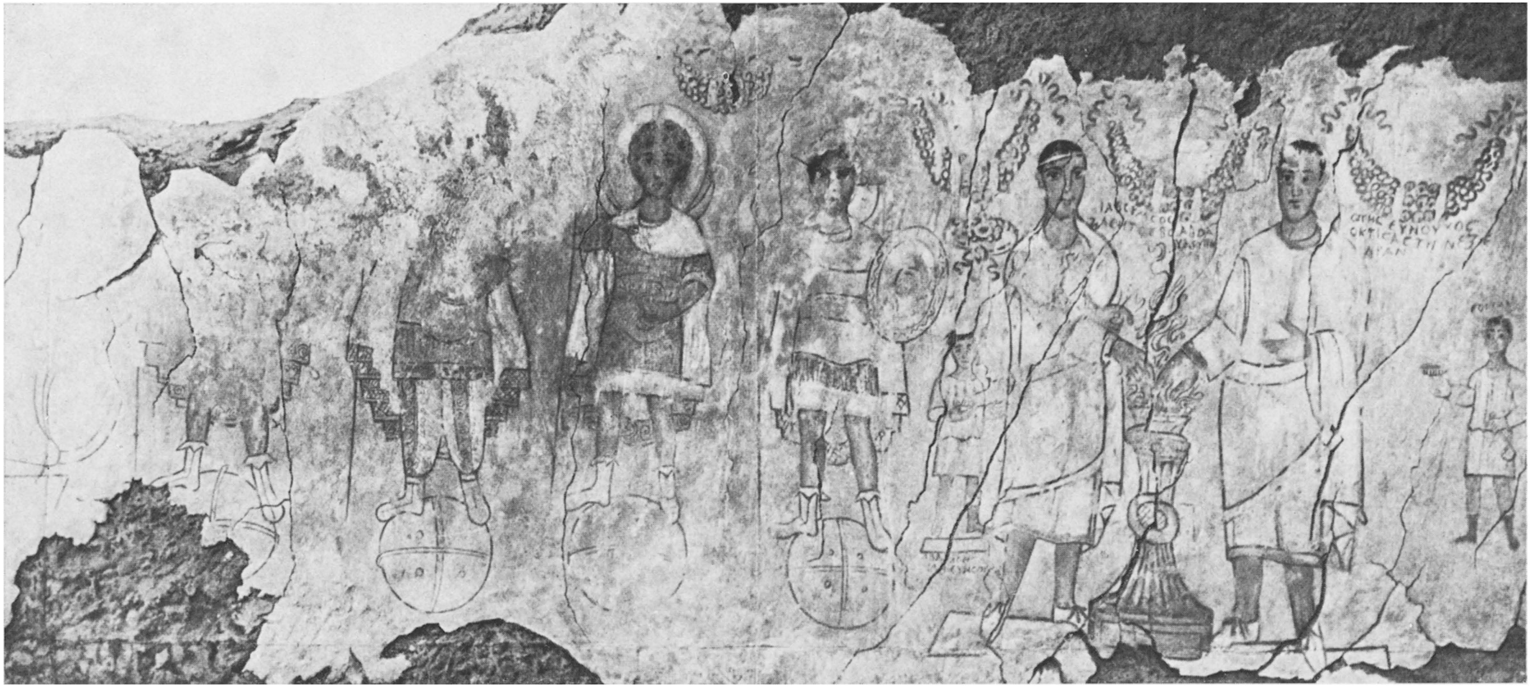

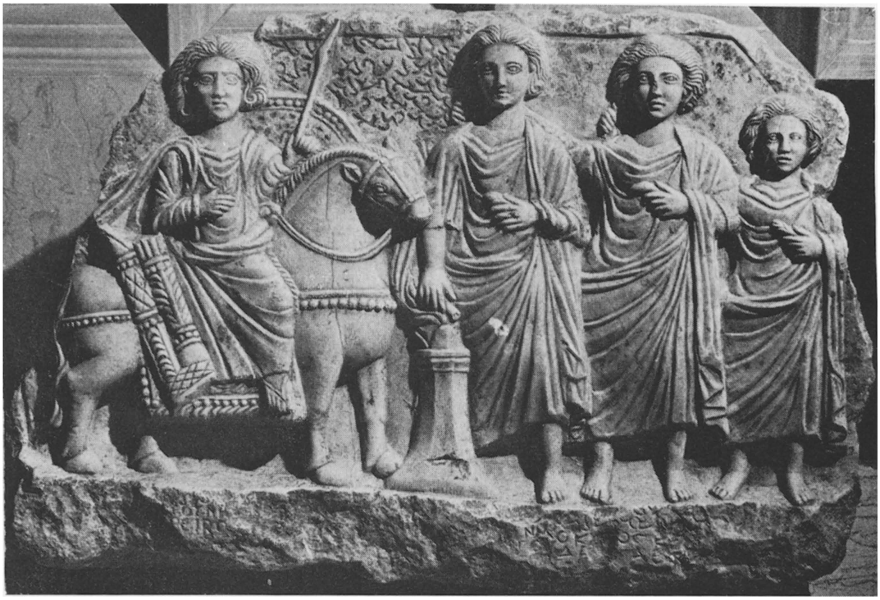

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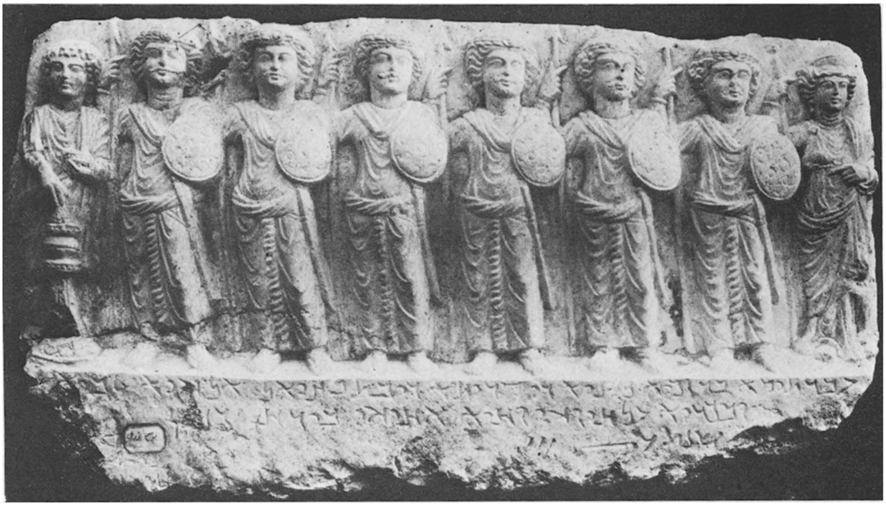

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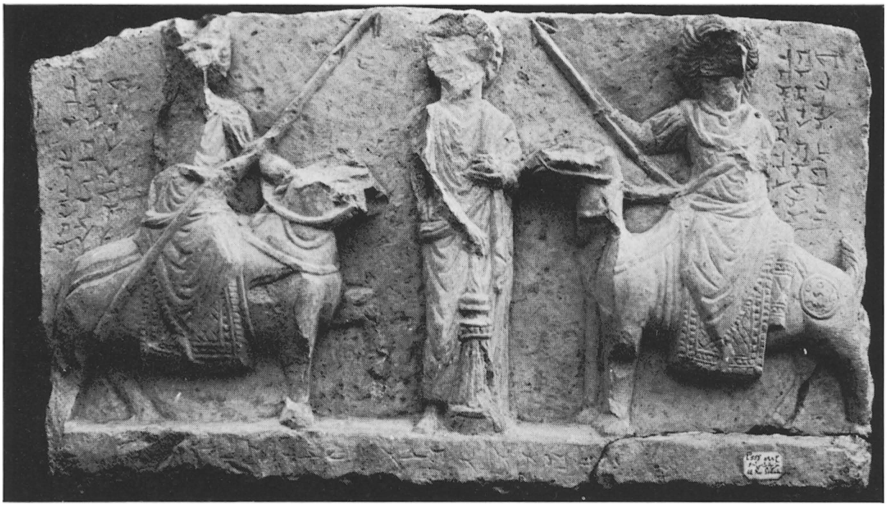

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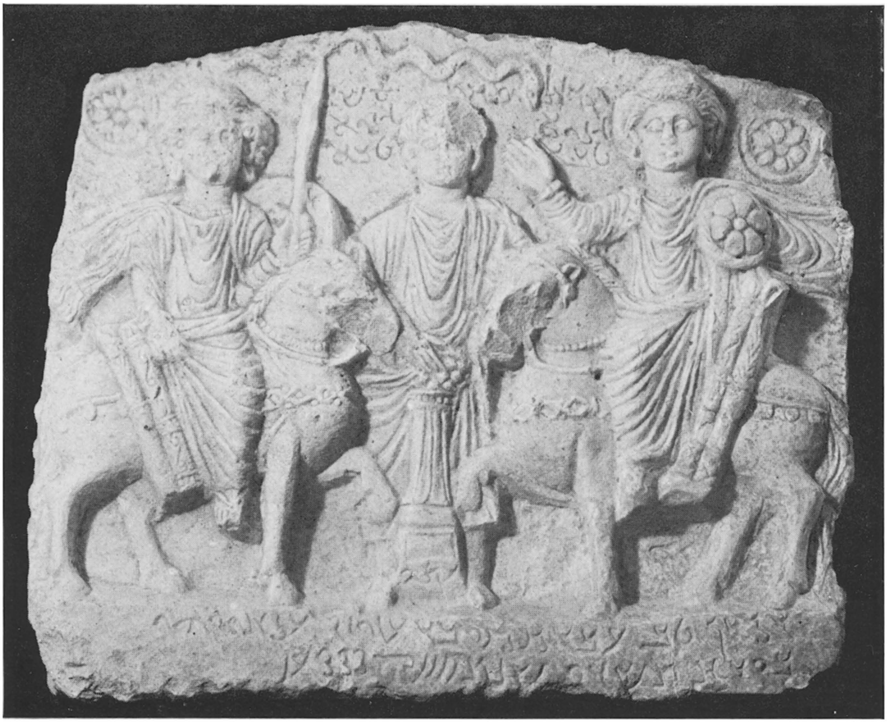

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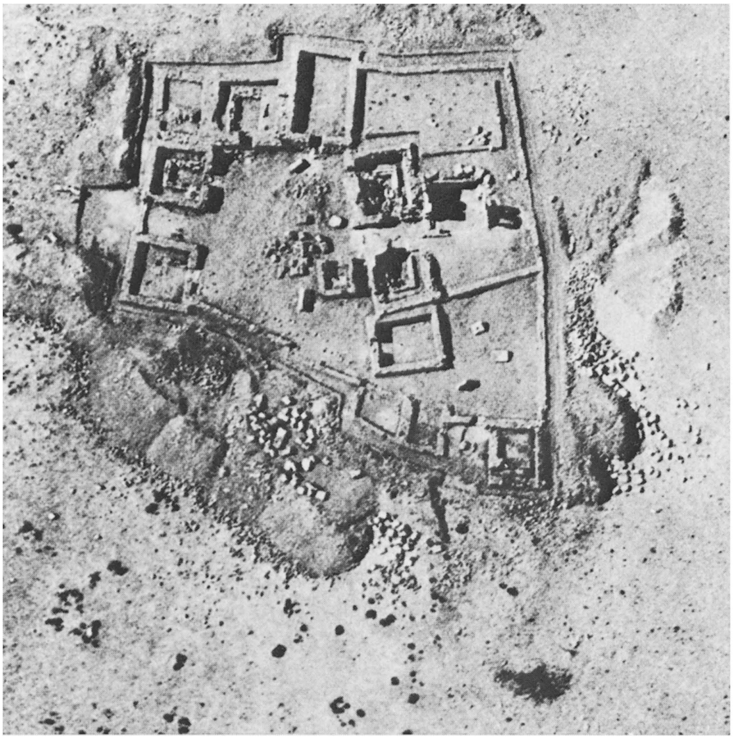

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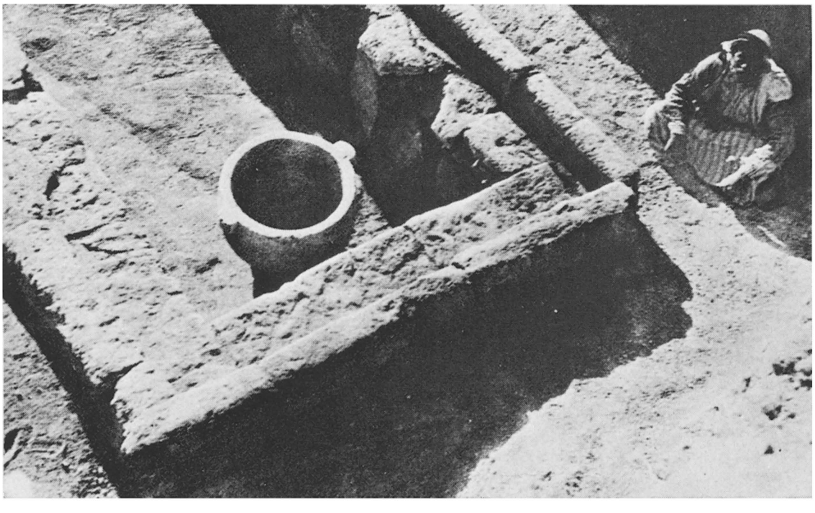

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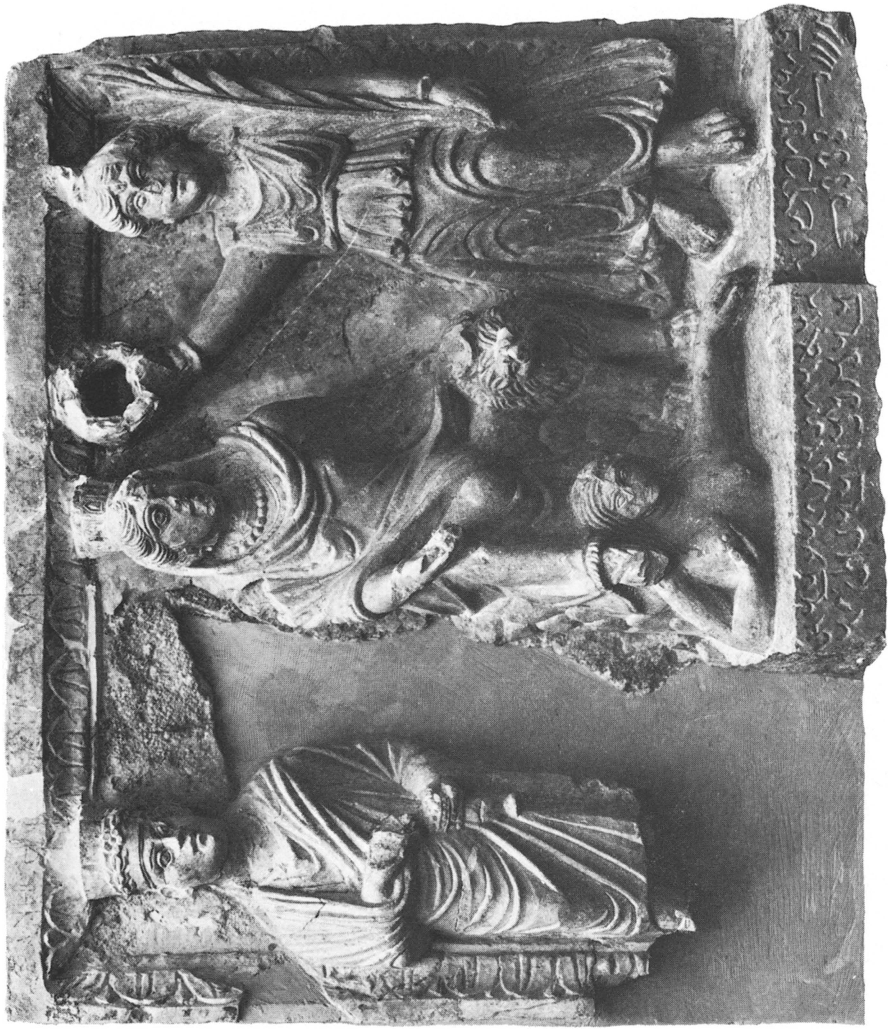

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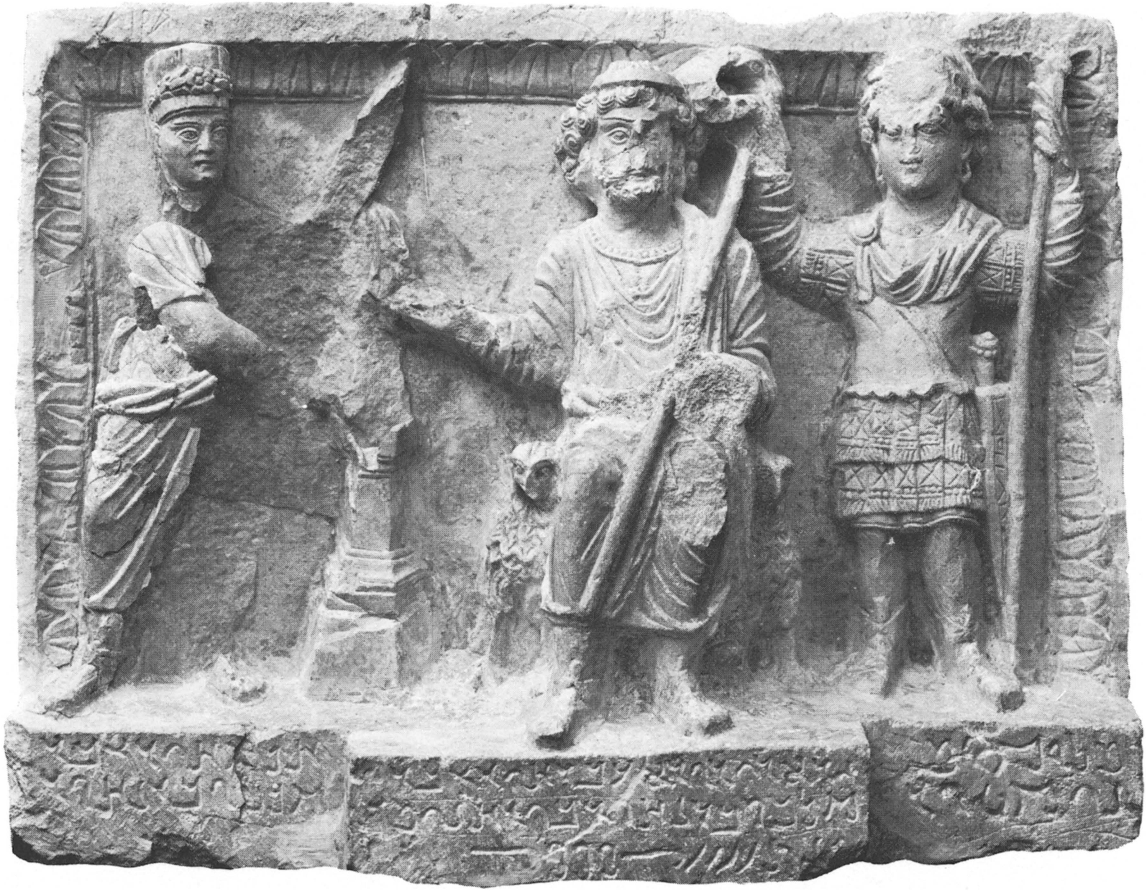

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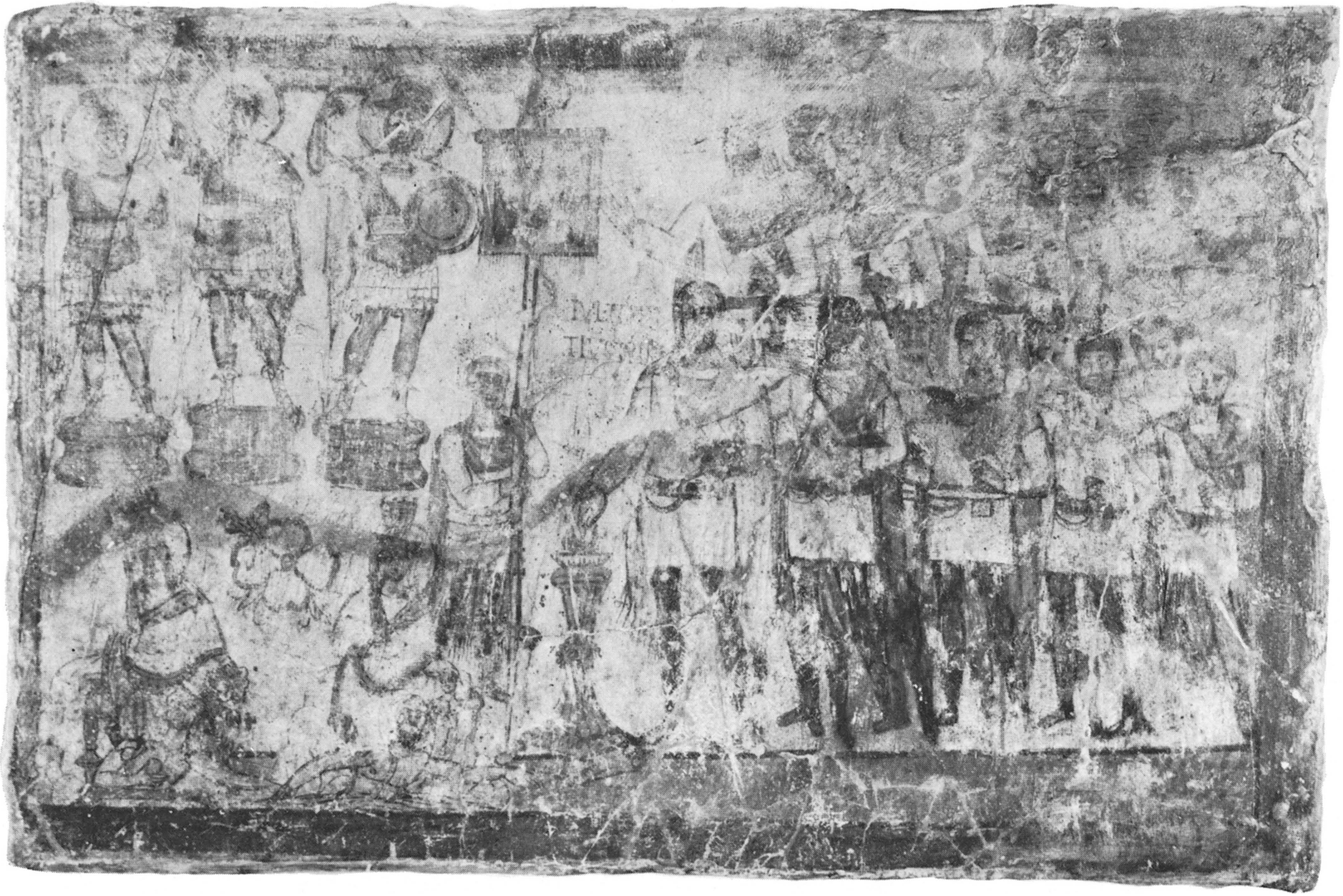

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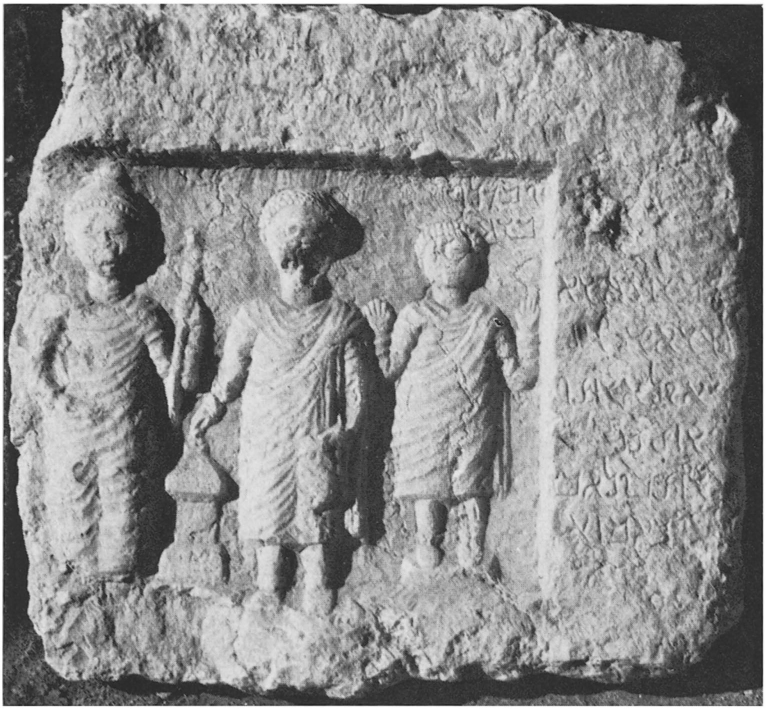

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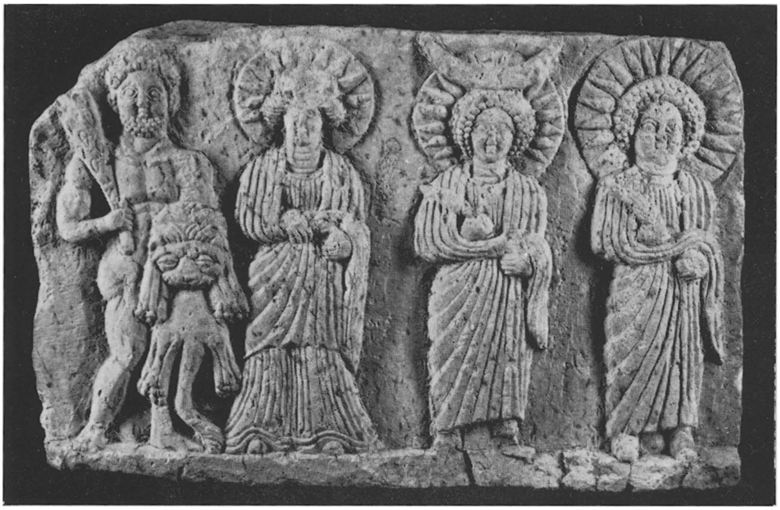

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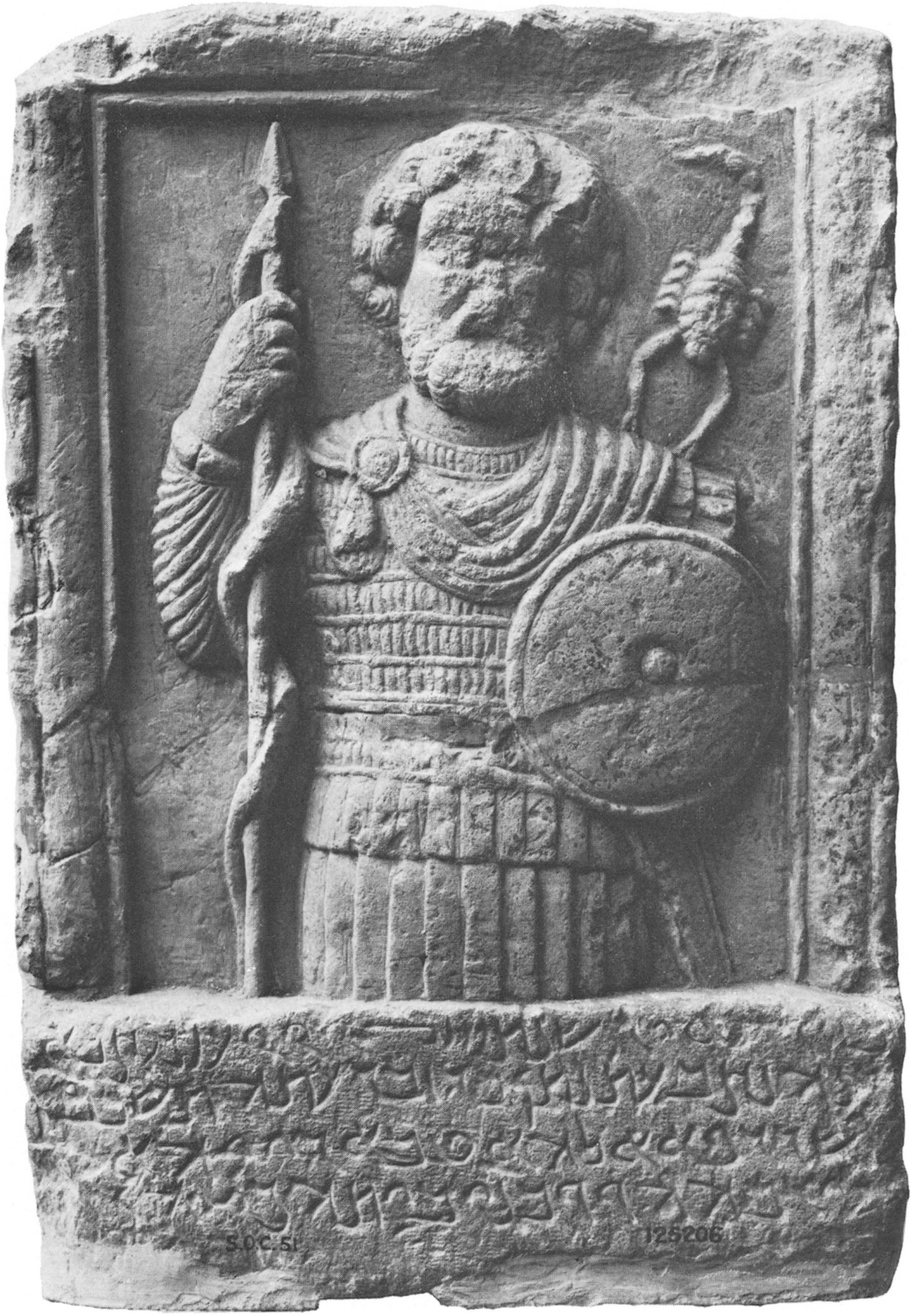
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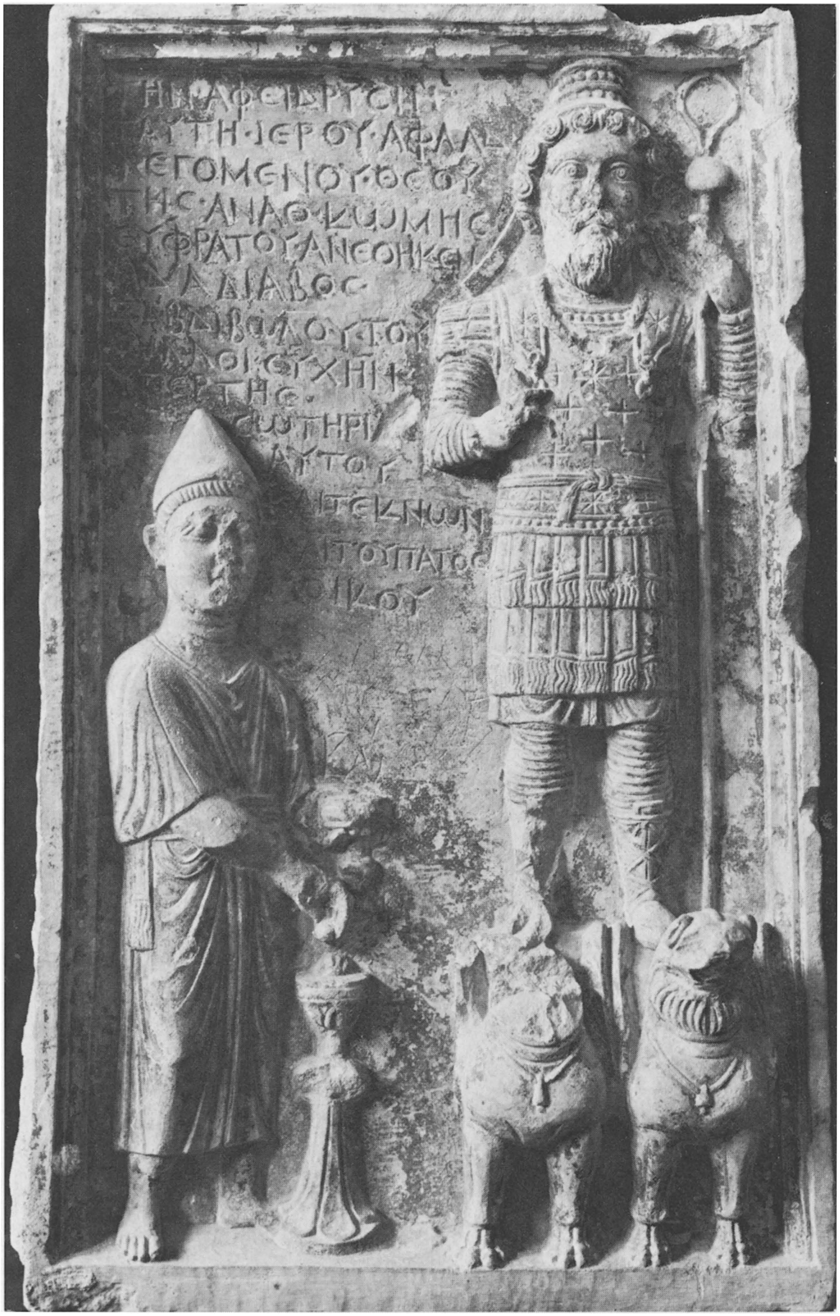
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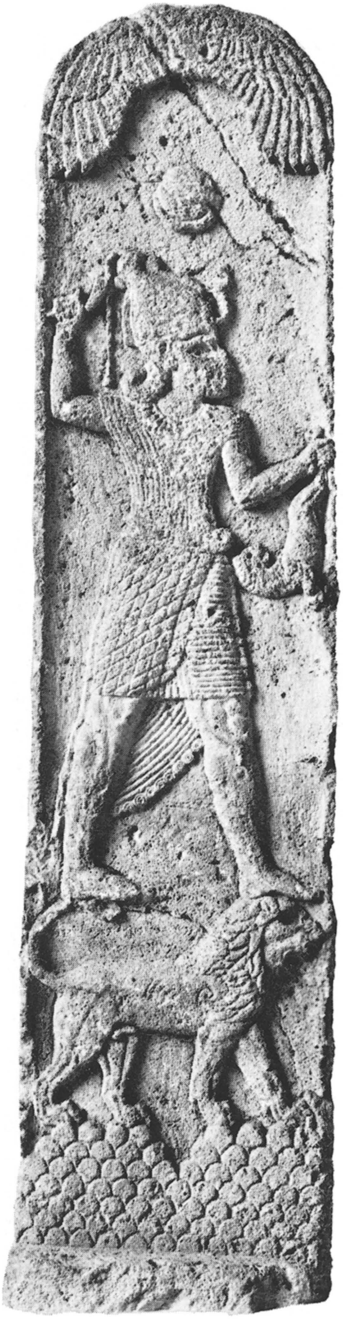
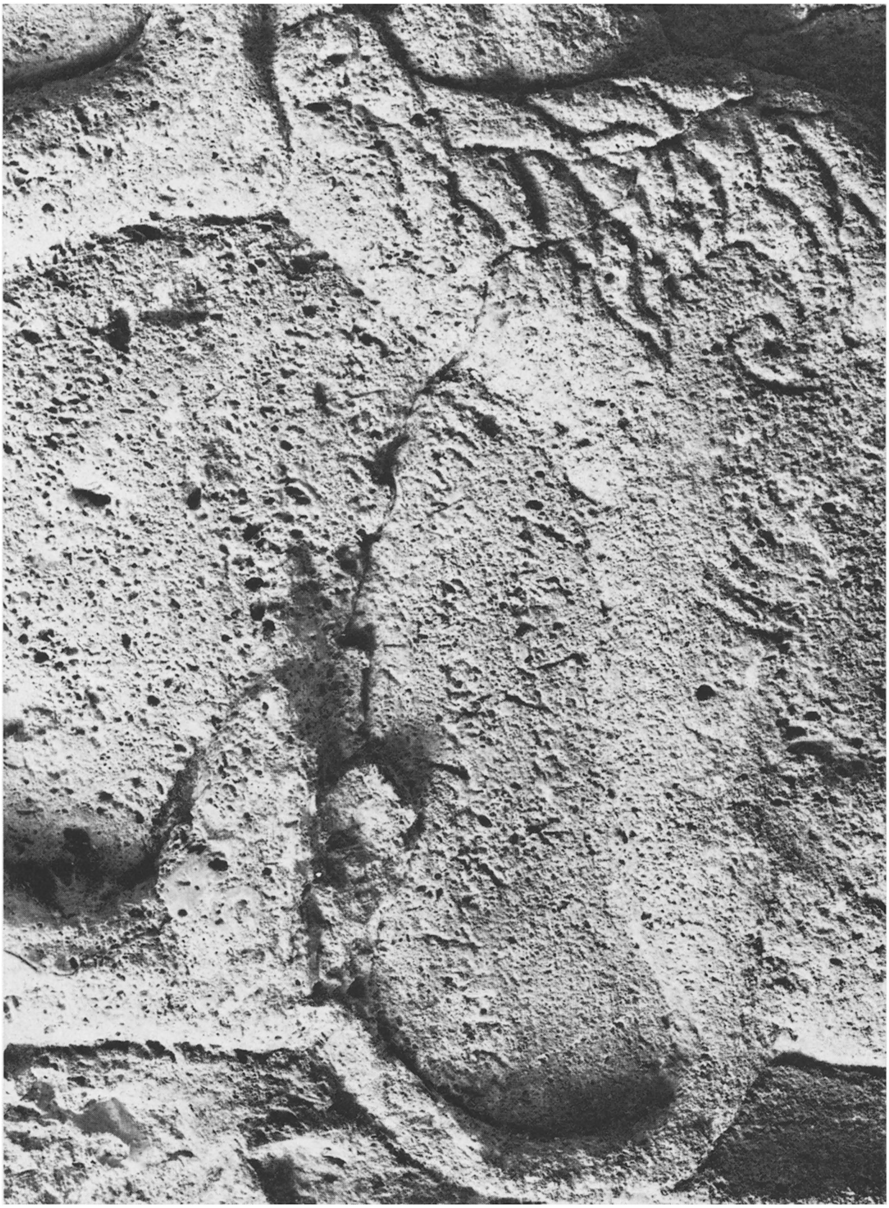
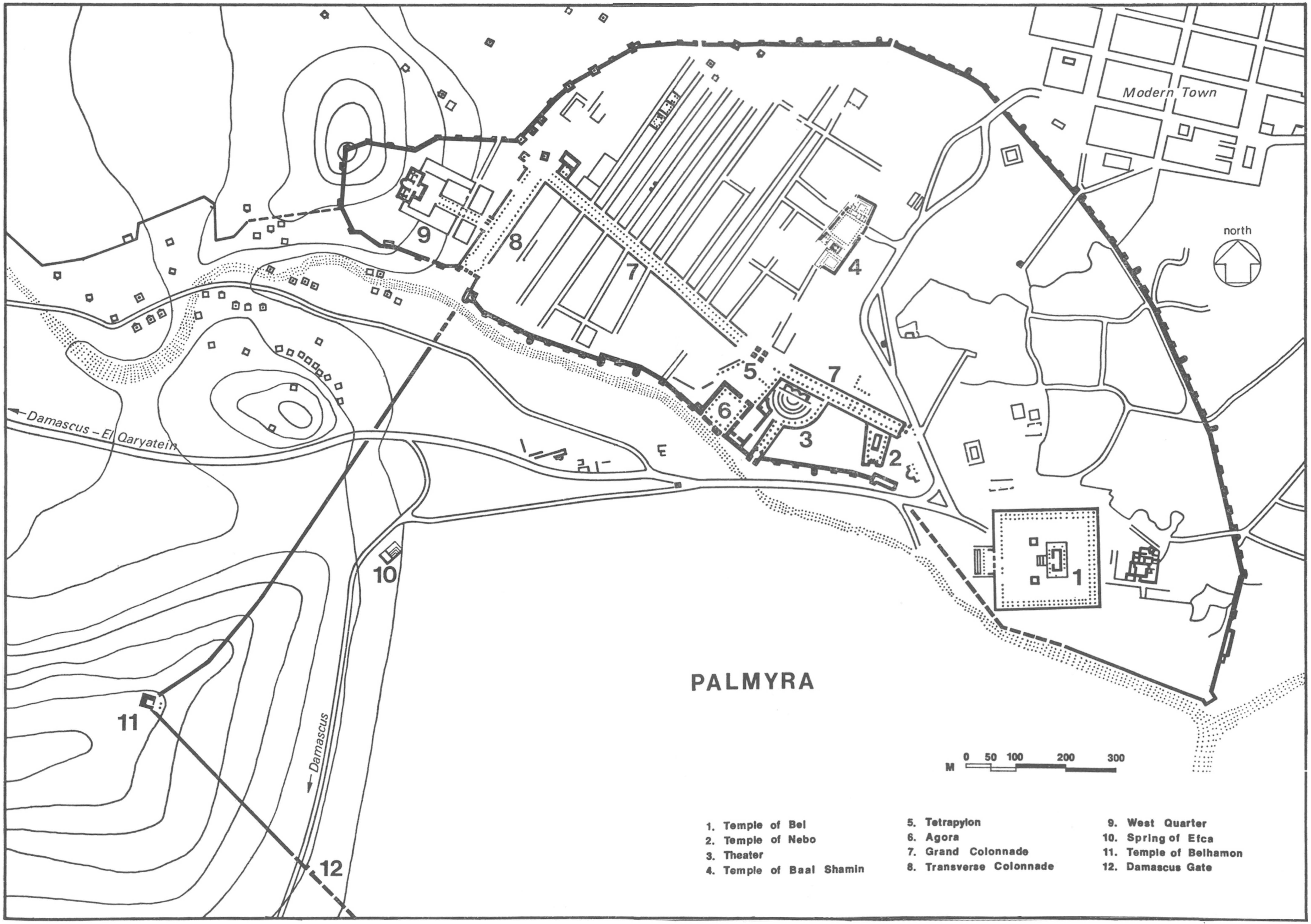
Plate XXXIV






Modern Town
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6
3
2
1
Damascus – El Qaryatein
10
11
12
Damascus
PALMYRA
M 0 50 100 200 300
1. Temple of Bel
2. Temple of Nebo
3. Theater
4. Temple of Baal Shamin
5. Tetrapylon
6. Agora
7. Grand Colonnade
8. Transverse Colonnade
9. West Quarter
10. Spring of Efca
11. Temple of Belhamon
12. Damascus Gate